

A CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM  
FOR LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS OF BURKINA FASO  
TRAINING MINISTERS TO BALANCE NUMERICAL GROWTH  
WITH SPIRITUAL MATURITY IN THE CHURCHES

A THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF  
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY  
ZACHARIE DELMA

MAY 2011



## CONTENTS

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....  | vi  |
| ABSTRACT .....   | vii |
| Chapter  |     |
| 1. THE SETTING, THE PROBLEM, AND A PLAN<br>FOR A SOLUTION .....  | 1   |
| The Setting .....  | 2   |
| The Problem: Lack of Education .....   | 15  |
| A Proposed Solution: Continuing Education .....  | 21  |
| Conclusion .....   | 26  |
| 2. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK .....  | 28  |
| God's Education Methods in the Old Testament and the<br>Possible Effect on Continuing Education Programs ..... | 29  |
| Training Patterns in the New Testament .....   | 36  |
| The Holy Spirit as Teacher .....   | 43  |
| 3. LITERATURE REVIEW .....   | 47  |
| The Necessity of Transformational, Continuing Education .....  | 48  |
| The Role of the Teacher .....  | 66  |
| 4. THE PROGRAM OF CONTINUING EDUCATION .....   | 73  |
| Education Efforts in the Church .....  | 74  |
| Efforts of the First Missionaries in Spiritual Formation .....   | 76  |
| Efforts of Today's Leaders for Spiritual Formation .....   | 80  |
| Focus on Local Church Leaders .....  | 88  |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| The Structure of the Continuing Education Program ..... | 89  |
| Teachings of the Program .....                          | 93  |
| Teachers of the Program .....                           | 110 |
| Course Preparation .....                                | 111 |
| Teaching Methods .....                                  | 111 |
| The Length of the Training .....                        | 112 |
| Evaluation of the Teachers .....                        | 113 |
| Finances.....   | 113 |
| Conclusion .....  | 114 |
| 5. EVALUATION, OUTCOMES AND RECOMMANDATIONS .....       | 115 |
| Evaluation .....  | 116 |
| Findings .....  | 120 |
| Interpretation of the Findings .....                    | 132 |
| Training Outcomes .....                                 | 138 |
| Recommendations .....                                   | 141 |
| Conclusion .....  | 146 |

## Appendix

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| A. A SAMPLE PROGRAM FOR DECENTRALIZED<br>SEMINARS .....       | 148 |
| B. A SAMPLE OF REPORT OF THE<br>TEACHERS .....                | 150 |
| C. A SAMPLE PROGRAM FOR WOMEN IN<br>MINISTRY CONFERENCE ..... | 151 |
| D. A SAMPLE PROGRAM OF THE SCHOOL OF<br>EVANGELIZATION .....  | 153 |



|  |     |
|--|-----|
| E. EXAMPLES OF THEMES DEVELOPED .....  | 156 |
| F. A SAMPLE OF THE EVALUATION SHEET .....  | 158 |
| G. A TYPICAL SCHEDULE FOR A THREE-DAY TRAINING<br>SESSION .....                                      | 160 |
| H. A SUMMARY OF THE TEACHING PRODUCED IN A FORM<br>OF BOOKLET IN OCTOBER 2007 .....                  | 161 |
| I. A SUMMARY OF TEACHING PRODUCED IN A FORM OF<br>BOOKLET ON THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY<br>SPIRIT ..... | 165 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY .....   | 174 |
| VITA .....   | 179 |

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I am thankful beyond words to the one who gave me the privilege to know and to serve Him. This work could not have been accomplished without the support and encouragement of many. I am grateful for the gracious leaders God put on my way. The Executive Board of Burkina Faso Assemblies of God and others at the Assemblies of God headquarters encouraged me and prayed for me through my labors. I am also thankful for the example and encouragement of David Currie, David Horn, and Kenneth Swetland, and the other teachers of my D.Min. cohort. My lovely wife, Aoua, always encouraged me and made opportunities for me to make all the trips from Africa to the United States for the study. My children, Samuel, Danielle, Michele, Lucie, and Josue, cheered me up from the beginning to the end. Above all, Jesus Christ imparted and sustained my passion to fulfill the vision of helping the churches, through their local leaders, to find a balance between numerical growth and spiritual maturity.

Soli Deo Gloria.

## **ABSTRACT**

This work is a study focused on the development of a continuing training program for local church leaders in Burkina Faso. It first shows the need for a continuing education program in a fast-growing African church. It asserts that a continuing education program is a lever that can promote not only development and well-being but also spiritual maturity. The fast-growing church and a low level of education are realities the churches in Africa are facing. Many local church leaders lack sufficient training to care well for their flocks. This problem is exacerbated by multiple challenges the country faces. In addition to a lack of development and education, there is pressure to have a large number of congregants but with no effort to build qualitative spiritual formation. Furthermore, this work affirms that continuing education is the best tool in this situation because it aims to change lives by equipping the local church leaders with knowledge and leadership tools that help them to promote change in attitude and behaviors.

The training program set to reach the goal of maturity is then presented. The thesis-project also includes an explanation and evaluation of the continuing education program that has been implemented for some years. Based on the feedback obtained from the leaders themselves and the teachers, this work gives instruction for further development of the continuing education program. The work concludes with recommendation for further study of the continuing education program in order to improve it and to keep pace with the changing context of life.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **THE SETTING, THE PROBLEM, AND A PLAN FOR A SOLUTION**

This ever-changing world and its mutations create new challenges. The socioeconomic crises the world is experiencing increase pressures, and it seems that the future of this generation is one about which one can only hypothesize or speculate. Even the church is concerned and local church leaders often ask, "What can we do to equip ourselves in order to affect positively this changing generation?" The church is facing many difficulties, and even though these problems seem to be insurmountable, this work is done in order to propose solutions. More than four thousand pastors actively involved in ministry in Burkina Faso may be channels for change if they are well equipped with tools to meet the needs.

The church is growing at a phenomenal rate in Burkina Faso, but in some ways it may be a victim of that growth. Growth without maturity may ruin a church, and the church in Burkina Faso is at risk for experiencing that result of growth. The problem is that the local church leaders have only a little training, and that limited training affects the maturity of the church, but an opportunity for further education for leaders could address this issue.

## **The Setting**

### **The Country and the People**

Formerly Upper Volta, Burkina Faso is the name given to the country by a revolutionary government in 1982 and that name remained even after the end of the revolution. Burkina Faso is a little country located in West Africa and the World Bank's Support of Education in Burkina Faso has relevant information about its rank among the countries of the world:

Burkina Faso is a landlocked Sahelian country located in the heart of West Africa and sharing borders with Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Mali, and Niger. It has 274,200 sq. km. (106,000 sq. mi.). Poorly endowed in natural resources, and with a limited and unpredictable rainfall, it has weak and vulnerable economic potential. Known as one of the poorest countries in the world, Burkina Faso is ranked 171st of 174 countries in the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) 1999 Human Development Index. The country has low social indicators: a life expectancy at birth of 52 years (2008), 45% of the population living below the absolute poverty line, a 99 per 1000 infant mortality rate, and a per capita GNP of US\$ 240.<sup>1</sup>

Burkina Faso's 15.2 million people (2008) belong to two major West African cultural groups. The Voltaic Mossi make up about one-half of the population. They claim descent from warriors who migrated to present-day Burkina Faso from Ghana and established an empire that lasted more than eight hundred years. The people are predominantly farmers, and the Mossi kingdom is still led by the Mogho Naba, whose court is in Ouagadougou.

---

<sup>1</sup> Amadou Ouedraogo, "An Overview of the World Bank's Support of Education in Burkina Faso over the Last Decade," The University of Iowa Center for International Finance and Development, <http://www.uiowa.edu/ifdebook/issues/africa/perspectives/2001B1.shtml> (accessed June 12, 2009).

The second major group are the Mandé, whose common language is Dioula. The Mandé are composed of many ethnic groups and languages: the Bambara, Bobo, Bissa, Samo, Bolon, Jula, Marka, and others. History says that they came from the high valley of Niger. The Bobo people (Bobo Fing) speak a Mandé language. The Bobo number about 110,000 people, with the great majority in Burkina Faso, although the area occupied by the Bobo extends north into Mali. The major Bobo community in the south is Bobo-Dioulasso, the second city of Burkina Faso and the old French colonial capital.

The Bwa people of Central Burkina and the Bobo are similar in several ways, especially in the lack of central political authority and the common cult of Do. However, they are quite different in their world view. The Bwa are open and receptive to outside influences, and their society is in a constant process of change, while the Bobo are far more conservative, preferring to preserve the purity of their traditions. In addition, their language, religious ceremonies, initiations, and especially their sculptural styles are quite different.

The Bwa are farmers, and they consider this to be the most noble of occupations. Most work in the fields is done by men, although women help occasionally during planting and some harvests and by carrying harvested crops to the village. In addition to cotton, the Bwa grow grains (millet, sorghum, rice), root crops (yams), ground peas, and peanuts. The Bwa now grow so much cotton they often must purchase food for cash in distant markets. The gathering of wild crops, which continues every year, contributes substantially to their diet.

Women are responsible for all domestic chores and care for children, and they gather wild crops. Women used to make large quantities of vegetable butter from the karité (shea nuts) and soap from the neré, which were sold in the market. Women brew the millet beer that is essential for all rituals.

Men construct basketry beehives that are placed in the branches of trees in the bush. The wild honey is gathered by children and is used to brew a delicious drink of millet flour, honey, and water that is avidly consumed during festivals. Traditionally there was little livestock raising, except for a few goats and chickens to be offered in sacrifices.<sup>2</sup>

Burkina Faso is an ethnically integrated, secular state. Most of Burkina's people are concentrated in the south and center of the country, with a population density sometimes exceeding 48 per square kilometer (125 per sq. mi.). Hundreds of thousands of Burkinabe migrate to Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana, many of them seeking seasonal agricultural work. These flows of workers are affected by external events; the September 2002 coup attempt in Cote d'Ivoire and the ensuing fighting there meant that hundreds of thousands of Burkinabe returned to Burkina Faso.

### The Climate and Style of Living

Two main seasons characterize the area: the dry season and the rainy season. The dry season is divided into the cold time and the hot time. In the cold time, the temperature is between 15 and 30 degrees Celsius, but in the hot season it may rise to 45 degrees Celsius (about 113 degrees Fahrenheit). The

---

<sup>2</sup> Christopher D. Roy, "The Art of Burkina Faso," Christopher D. Roy, 2002, <http://pagesperso-orange.fr/africart/pages/artbf.htm> (accessed August 21, 2009).

temperatures mean that visitors feel most comfortable during December and January.

The major economic activities in Burkina are farming and herding. The country has only three months of a rainy season each year, and because of this fact, the land is dry. In the rainy season, farmers grow millet, rice, and corn. Farmers also produce vegetables and different kinds of fruits, such as mangoes and bananas. In order to cope with the need for water, the government has built many dams. Construction of these dams produces lots of fish and keeps many people employed.

In the savannah, farmers breed sheep, goats, and poultry. This sub-Saharan part of the country has lush vegetation in some places, but population growth and the need for comestibles threaten the environment. Trees are cut without discernment, promoting desertification.

The north part of the country, which is part of the Sahara, is very dry. In this dry area, people are mainly cattle breeders, so meat is exported.

In traditional settings, huts are round and built from mud with grass roofs. Sheds for poultry and goats are usually in the main entrance of the home. Polygamy is practiced, so one family may have more than seven mud huts; each wife and each older child owns one. In many places, the hut of the chief of the family is in the middle.

A typical meal features dishes that use corn meal, although rice seems to be overtaking corn as a staple of the diet. The flour of corn is used to make a kind of paste that is eaten with sauce that features peanuts, vegetables, or other



ingredients, depending on the area. Poultry and goats provide some meat, but the main reason for breeding animals is to provide financial resources.

In the past, the country has gone through difficult years of political revolution, but since 1983, there has been a democratic government. Living conditions are improving. Schools have been built in many places, and the availability of technology, such as telephones and wireless, has spread. In a country where Muslims are a plurality, the prime minister is a Christian. He has worked to bring about positive changes in a challenging moral climate.

### The Economy

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of \$440. More than 80 percent of the population relies on subsistence agriculture for its livelihood, with only a small fraction directly involved in industry and services. Drought, poor soil, lack of adequate communications and other infrastructure, a low literacy rate, and an economy vulnerable to external shocks are all longstanding problems.

The export economy remains subject to fluctuations in world prices. Staple crops are millet, sorghum, maize, and rice. Cash crops are cotton, peanuts, karité, and sesame. Manufacturing is limited to cotton and food processing, mainly in Bobo-Dioulasso, and imports are subject to heavy tariffs. The

government uses that money to pay workers. Telephone and Internet service is relatively reliable, but the cost of utilities is very high.<sup>3</sup>

Fewer than 10 percent of the people have cars. The main means of transportation are donkey trucks, bicycles, and motorbikes. Population growth is phenomenal, with a rate of 3.109%,<sup>4</sup> and improved access to health care favors growth. Globalization has overturned the classic ways of doing business. Most goods and foodstuffs, such as rice, oil, cloth, salt, and wheat flour, are imported; societies in Africa produce goods, but transforming them into other products is not a specialty. For example, one manufacturer produces clothes in a small quantity, using cotton produced in the country. There are tailors to make clothes, but most clothes are imported. It is getting easier to find or buy whatever is needed. The work force is distributed in this way: agriculture, 90%; industry, 2.1%; commerce, services, and government, 5.5%.<sup>5</sup>

As was already noted, many Burkinabe migrate to neighboring countries for work, and their remittances provide a contribution to the economy's balance of payments that is second only to cotton as a source of foreign exchange earnings. Burkina Faso is attempting to improve the economy by developing its mineral resources, improving its infrastructure, making its agricultural and

---

<sup>3</sup> Bureau of African Affairs, "Burkina Faso," U.S. Bureau of Public Affairs, electronic information and publication office/ March 2, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2834.htm> (accessed June 14, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Nation Master, "People statistics: Population growth rate by country," Nation Master, 2003, [http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo\\_pop\\_gro\\_rat-people-population-growth-rate](http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo_pop_gro_rat-people-population-growth-rate) (accessed August 22, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Bureau of African Affairs, "Burkina Faso," U.S. Bureau of Public Affairs, electronic information and publication office/ March 2, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2834.htm> (accessed June 14, 2009).

livestock sectors more productive and competitive, and stabilizing the supplies and prices of food grains.

### Beliefs

A plurality (55 percent) of Burkinabe are Muslim, but most people also adhere to traditional African religions (20 percent). Christians, both Roman Catholics and Protestants, comprise about 25 percent of the population, with their largest concentration being in urban areas.

Traditional beliefs are animistic. Animists believe in one god who is far away from the living world. The fathers' souls (*Kymse*) are the rulers of the living world. Animists sacrifice to worship or to appease the souls or to get health or abundant crops. The Mossi, the main group in the country, resist Christianity because they want to retain their traditional beliefs:

The Mossi believes in a single and supreme creator being, named *Wendé*, who animates all aspects of the environment with his force. The religious beliefs of the Mossi are concerned with the control of the supernatural forces that vitalize every aspect of their natural environment. The Mossi believe that each person possesses a soul: *sigha*, which takes the name *kyma* after death. This spirit, according to the Mossi, is an animal, frequently invisible, a serpent, crocodile, antelope, or rabbit. The soul is related to this animal. To kill a serpent or crocodile in that village is to kill a human being.<sup>6</sup>

Animism is Africans' basic religion, and the culture it develops has positive and negative sides. Solidarity and strong social ties are positive aspects of animism. Families extend beyond the nuclear family, and, for example, it is the responsibility of the whole family to find a wife for a young man. After marriage, the wife belongs to her husband for procreation, but she is the property of the

---

<sup>6</sup> Roy, "The Art of Burkina Faso" (accessed August 21, 2009).

clan. Her role is to enlarge the clan, and because of that there is no divorce in a traditional African family.

Roy's anthropological research has touched points on Mossi culture that are relevant:

The Mossi are also concerned with maintaining good relations with the spirits of their ancestors, who are able to manipulate the forces of nature for their benefit or detriment. After death the spirits of the ancestors continue to take an interest in the affairs of their descendants, just as they did as living members of the group. In order to maintain good relations with the ancestral spirits, the living must adhere strictly to the traditional rules for proper behavior established by their grandfathers, the "yabaramba." To stray from the yaba sooré—the way of the ancestors—is to risk arousing their anger; the ancestors may punish any important transgression with a disease, especially smallpox, with some physical infirmity, especially blindness, or with infertility. The primary link between the Moaga and his ancestors is the senior male member of his lineage or clan.<sup>7</sup>

The author of this work has grown up in an animist culture, and what Roy describes here is exactly one lives every day. Ancestral law must be followed, and any mistake is severely punished.

An explanation about two people groups gives insight into traditional beliefs and how those beliefs influence people's lives. The Bobo are farmers, and like most peoples in Burkina except the Mossi, they are politically non-centralized. They produce masks in leaves, fibers, wood, and cloth. Initiation is a practice among many tribes, and this period is used for many purposes. One of the purposes is education. The different levels of knowledge are explained to Bobo boys in several steps spread out over a period of fifteen years. Each of the

---

<sup>7</sup> Roy, "The Art of Burkina Faso" (accessed August 21, 2009).

new steps in the initiation is punctuated by important ceremonies when the initiates dance with several types of masks.<sup>8</sup>

All these tribes are mainly animist, and the preceding study shows cultural pressure and hints at belief in witchcraft. During a recent visit to Africa, Pope Benedict XVI spoke about many Africans "living in fear of spirits, of malign and threatening powers. In their bewilderment they end up even condemning street children and the elderly as alleged sorcerers. Who can go to them to proclaim that Christ has triumphed over death and all those occult powers?" The pope was expressing his concern about the persistence of belief in witchcraft, and this belief is widespread throughout the continent. In Kenya, hardly a day passes without news reports of this phenomenon, especially the harassment of suspected witches.<sup>9</sup>

The many taboos in animism annihilate initiative and diversity of thought. In his preaching at the Third Pan-African Conference, the Reverend Beeki O. said, "The strongholds that hinder African development are many but Jesus is the only hope for Africa. There is something to be done to open the eyes and the mind of the people and get them into the salvation Jesus brought for humanity."<sup>10</sup> Animism affects both the living conditions of the people and the growth of the church. In many areas, all believers come from an animistic background, and the attraction of one's original background is powerful. Although its influence is powerful, animism is not a threat to Christianity. In power encounters, animists

---

<sup>8</sup> Roy, "The Art of Burkina Faso" (accessed August 21, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> Henry Makori, "Why Belief in Witchcraft Remains Strong Among Africans," All Africa, 2009, <http://www.Allafrica.com> (accessed April 3, 2009).

<sup>10</sup> Beeki O., "Jesus, the Only Hope for Africa," address at Africa Evangelicals Association's Pan-African Conference, Ouagadougou, 2004.

always lose. The power of the gospel overcomes all kinds of curses and makes it easy to evangelize in many places.

For Christianity and animism, the main threat, which has grown during the last two decades, is Islam. Animism with its witchcraft and aspects of the social culture has deceived many Africans, and Christianity, through its individualistic social life, has fostered the growth of Islam. One example is that Christianity has not gone beyond what Africans used to do with sharing. In the African way of living, sharing with others is very important. The goods of one member of the family belong to all the family members. But the individualistic way of living in Christian life has been a negative factor that opened doors for Islam. Islam emphasizes human relationships and social life. It seems to offer solutions for the difficult living conditions in Africa. In addition, Africans like to have many wives, and Islam allows polygamy. Even though Islam is spreading quickly, a great percentage of its believers are folk believers. They have mosques everywhere, and the finances for construction come from Islamic countries. The extremist-fundamentalist belief that encourages holy wars (*Jihad*) is not yet strong in Burkina Faso, but the high percentage of Muslims in the population means that some Islamic laws are beginning to be imposed.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Catholicism was the first Christian tradition to be introduced into the country. Catholics assimilated with animistic culture, which makes easy for people to adhere to both traditions. Protestants came to Burkina Faso later, in 1921. The first missionaries who came from the United States were Pentecostals, mainly Assemblies of God. The

emerging churches are evangelical. In these churches, worship is lively and noisy. Most of the evangelical churches are simple. The churches are built with mud. The Bible schools have lot of students. The program of training in these Bible schools includes practical training in masonry, carpentry, or farming. This training equips students and enables them to settle everywhere and plant churches. The evangelical churches have a strong missionary focus that extends to countries around Burkina Faso. Missionaries are sent also to Europe and the United States, and these missionaries follow the example of the apostle Paul—they know a trade that allows them to be self-supporting.

Every three years, evangelical leaders are elected by the pastors to oversee districts and subdistricts. Each pastor manages his church with a local team of deacons. Because of the low income of the people, pastors are allowed to farm or to have a part-time job.

#### Education: Traditional and Modern

Education is conducted mainly in French, which only 15 percent of Burkinabè can speak, rather than in the first languages of the country. The literacy rate for the adult population is 37 percent.<sup>11</sup> Only about 40 percent of children go to primary school, and only 9 percent continue to secondary school. Thus, oral tradition is still used as a primary means of communication in society.

---

<sup>11</sup> MapZones, "Burkina Faso," Map Zones, 2000/2009, <http://www.MapZones.com>: Burkina Faso (accessed June 14, 2009).

Traditional African societies use oral teaching as a medium of teaching their population socially acceptable behavior through songs, poetry, and histories. In his writing, Niane shows how tradition is perpetuated faithfully.

I teach kings the history of their ancestors  
so that the lives of the ancients might  
serve them as an example, for the  
world is old, but the future springs  
from the past.<sup>12</sup>

Oral tradition has been successful as a means of transferring values from generation to generation, as is shown by the way that the older generation lives. Values such as respect for others, honesty, and nurturing relationships are demonstrated among people, especially older people, in traditional societies.

The arrival of the French at the beginning of the twentieth century marks the beginning of modern education on a regular basis. Today, primary schools, secondary schools, and universities are spread throughout the country. But in the beginning, people's mentality was to resist such an education. Education in school was not only to embrace the culture of the West but also to eliminate African culture by pushing the student to forsaking one's own culture. Even until recently, in some remote areas of the country, such a fear has fostered an attitude that has been a hindrance for western education. While the author of this thesis was conducting his research, a member of his church shared that he had lived in a village twelve years ago. As a teacher working for the government, he had been sent to a village where it was difficult even to get children in school. One of his fellow teachers managed to get 43 pupils in his class, and they did

---

<sup>12</sup> D. T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, trans. G. D. Pickett (London: Longman, 1970), 1.



well. But, after three years, 14 dropped out because of social pressures. By the year of the final exam before secondary school, there were 21 students in the class. Because that final test allows children to move on to secondary school, the pressure became strong in the entire village. The teachers managed as best they could, but only 1 student passed the test. He passed with a very good grade, but the villagers killed him the same day.

Most of the schools today are now in reasonable condition and have basic equipment. The main problems in many areas are the scarcity of schools and the low income of many parents who cannot afford to send their children to school. Parents have to buy exercise books, pens, and pencils, as well as pay school fees.

By law, the size limit for one class is 65 children, but in many rural areas, classes are much bigger because there are not enough schools. If a school is full, some children cannot get a place, and they have to stay at home and try again the next year.

Education in Burkina Faso is structured in much the same way as in the rest of the world: primary, secondary, and higher education. The church is well engaged in this training program. Missionaries initiated mass education; Christians were trained in order to read the Bible, and that education has given opportunities to many people to change positively their living conditions. Less than two decades ago, the government initiated another mass training program, Bantaare, which is adult classes in native languages.

### **The Problem: Lack of Education**

The lack of education in the country is a real threat, for “education is central to development.”<sup>13</sup> Where there is no education, sickness and many other threats abound. One aftereffect of colonization is a spirit of dependency. The mentality of waiting for everything to come from oversea prevents self-development. Society suffers from an overabundance of people who do not know what to do to provide even minimal well-being for themselves or their families. What is more troubling is that some people are lazy but do not know it. Joseph Ki Zerbo, a historian, has written a book entitled *A Quand l'Afrique?* which means “When will be the turn of Africa?” His book is an African’s cry against the cultural hindrances that block African development. One example in his book is related to mistakes that people make that hinder development. When an African starts a business and begins to earn money, instead of investing to get good basis, he takes many wives and surrounds himself with “eaters” (people who cannot work but know only one thing: eating food).<sup>14</sup> For Ki Zerbo, Africa is far behind in comparison with other continents because of many cultural obstacles.

His thoughts are also shared by others, including John Chasteen, who points out clues some Africans’ habits that are hindrances for development: much is undone in their own lives, and the result is a life of sterility and unproductiveness. Because of a lack of diligence and discipline, they cannot

---

<sup>13</sup> Oxfam Cool Planet, “Virtual Journey of Burkina Faso,” Oxfam Cool Planet, 2009, <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/online/explore/journey/burkina/prteduc.htm> (accessed July 22, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Ki Zerbo, *A quand l'Afrique?* (France: Edition de poche, 2004), 23.

afford the “finest things” of life.<sup>15</sup> That is why poverty pounces like a bandit in many places in Africa.

In Africa, especially where the author of this work lives, social and cultural pressures sometimes become strongholds in people’s lives, and one example of such pressures is forced marriage. In Africa, many girls still do not attend school because their parents are afraid they will meet people who might drive them from their traditions. Educated girls have knowledge and are bold to argue with their parents because they want more control over their lives. Even worse, say the parents, educated daughters do not want to marry until they are nineteen or twenty. A young girl often does not have a say in whether and whom she will marry. It is the parents, both the man’s and the girl’s, who make the decision. The girl is frequently subordinate to her older partner in major family decisions, such as when to have children and how many to have. Many of these girls, in villages and towns throughout sub-Saharan Africa, are only about twelve years old, but such marriages are common, even though for decades early unions have been illegal in a number of African countries. The practice of forcing a girl into marriage took hold centuries ago, but it continues to be widespread, especially in countries where marriage typically takes place within clans with polygamous traditions. The girls are forced to wed distant relatives who are often three or four times their age and who sometimes have chosen the girl long before she reaches puberty. Data from twenty-two sub-Saharan African countries show the highest

---

<sup>15</sup> John Chasteen, “Digging Deeper in God’s Word,” *Charisma*, June 2006, 89.

rates of teenage girls either married or cohabiting are in Mali, Niger, Uganda, Burkina Faso, and Cameroon.<sup>16</sup>

Lack of knowledge, another stronghold, contributes to poverty and hinders agricultural and economic growth. In "Causes of Poverty in Africa," Lee Ann Dorskocil underlines realities many intellectual Africans agree with:

Poverty is rampant in our world today. However, it is more prevalent in certain areas. One of these areas is Africa. The people of Africa through no fault of their own live in an environment where poverty is, unfortunately, the norm. You may be asking yourself why this problem is so prevalent in Africa, what makes it different from other richer countries? . . . Lack of education . . . plays a part in the poverty of Africa. Many African citizens have never attended schools and thus do not have the skills necessary to increase their standing in society. Those who do receive some education rarely attend school anywhere near the number of years that students in other countries attend.<sup>17</sup>

Poverty is unfortunately the norm in many places because education has been neglected. Sometimes it is even more than a problem of education but a problem of the program of education. English-speaking countries seem to cope better in life than French-speaking people. Ghanaians are many and hard workers in Burkina Faso. They are finding their way in life better than do Burkinabe because their education system produces polyvalent people. Ghana is surrounded by French-speaking countries with a different currency system, yet this country is among the emergent countries in Africa.

---

<sup>16</sup> Ticky Monekosso, "Child Marriage 'Violates Rights,'" BBC News World, March 7, 2001, 14:09 GMT. Marriage rates for fifteen- to nineteen-year-old girls: Mali, 72%; Niger, 57%; Uganda, 47%; Burkina Faso, 44%; Cameroon, 41%; Central Africa Republic, 39%; Nigeria, 37%.

<sup>17</sup> Lee Ann Dorskocil, "Causes of Poverty in Africa," Helium, April 16, 2008, 2002-2011, <http://www.helium.com/items/1002970-causes-of-poverty-in-africa> (accessed June 15, 2009).

Poverty is one of the most intimidating powers that hinder the development of people, and education is crucial in eliminating taboos or other hindrances. For example, eating eggs can contribute to human health, but there is a tradition that forbids a pregnant woman to eat eggs because her child will be a thief if she does eat eggs.

Beside the strongholds that foster poverty the loss of moral values is to be noticed. Even among Christians, there is corruption. It is hard to believe that such lowness is current in countries where the majority of people are Christians. Writing on that illness in African societies, Robert R. Farrel describes it and calls for a removal of that sin:

From top to bottom, corruption permeates many African societies. Graft, nepotism, discrimination, bribery and outright thievery are prevalent in far too many nations. According to Transparency International, in 2008 seven of the 10 most corrupt nations in the world were African. For Africa to have any chance of improving, honesty and integrity must become ingrained in its societies.

The reasons behind Africa's problems are fundamentally spiritual in nature, not physical. War, oppression and corruption are rife in Africa, the major factors that stifle development. The motivating factors behind these are hatred, envy, malice, jealousy, lust and greed. When these are prevalent, they lead to the downfall of any nation or continent: "Righteousness [keeping God's commandments, Ps 119:172] exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). Until these things are removed, Africa's problems will not be solved. Throwing money at them will not work if the underlying CAUSES are ignored.<sup>18</sup>

Unless something is done to bring back moral values in African societies, development will remain far from them. That means that there are a lot to do, and the church plays a key role through its education efforts.

---

<sup>18</sup> Robert R. Farrell, "Can Africa Be Saved?" The Real Truth, June 10, 2009, 2009-2011, <http://www.realtruth.org/articles> (accessed June 5, 2009).

The numerical growth of the church has been phenomenal in the past twenty years. At the celebration of its fiftieth anniversary in 1971, the Assemblies of God of Burkina Faso had 25,000 members. At the seventy-fifth anniversary in 1996, there were 400,000 members. Today, membership is estimated at 700,000 members. This growth shows that churches have been started everywhere and the workers have been effective. The number of pastors rises quickly with the opening of many new Bible schools. But there are some facts that must not be ignored, and that is because of negative evidence. Even though the numerical growth is positive, there is a great need to be certain that people grow in spiritual maturity. The rapid numerical growth of the church, with a concurrent lack of spiritual maturity, is a threat to healthy Christian growth. There are strongholds that keep people far from the reality of new life in Christ. Pastors are warned there is a misconception in their belief, but only a few worry about it because they lack instruction. The best word that fit well here is still the lack of education.

The rural exodus has been a threat for stability in the country. Everyone says, "Why stay in a village where there is neither hope nor future?" Urbanization has created new situations and brought spiritual hunger in many places. This daily reality calls believers to rise up and follow the pattern of Jesus, but how can people satisfy their spiritual hunger if believers do not or cannot help them find where they can satisfy this need? In the Great Commission, Jesus commanded every believer to go in his name. Today, while the world denies the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ, some well-meaning Christians also deny by their faith or by their behavior the wholeness of the salvation in Jesus Christ.

In the past, Christians were true believers. They hated sin, but in the last two decades, a new phenomenon is being seen in many churches. Sin abounds: spiritual weaknesses, syncretism, and many other unbiblical behaviors. In many Christians' lives, superstition is still strong. Christian sellers in the market keep traditional beliefs. As an example, a seller's desire is to have or keep as many people as possible as customers in order to get more money. Such a desire is not wrong, but superstition pushes them to unbiblical practices. The belief is that some people are bringers of bad luck and can transmit it on vendors' goods when being the first of the day to buy. In their fear, these vendors are careful about who will be the first buyer of the day. This practice keeps many Christians in an unbiblical position, because this fear is a trap of the devil. Another belief that sets aside the blessing of God in a desert country is the negative thoughts against planting trees. That superstition believes that planting a tree shortens one's own life. Anyone who dares to plant will never see the fruits of that tree. Such a mentality in a desert country leads to dreadful consequences.

In the context of lack of education, a blossoming of numbers in a church has consequences. Rapid growth produces nominal Christians. In some churches, the Sunday services do not differ much from some worldly feasts in the style of the music and dancing. The clothes people wear in church are no more decent. The church cannot be truly a church if Christ-likeness is no more a priority in it, so finding solutions to lack of education is a priority.

Such a long list of problems may lead someone to wrong and negative conclusions. The experience of five decades of living, and the input of many



other writers, lead this writer to say that there is always a solution to any situation.

### **A Proposed Solution: Continuing Education**

In any context and situation, there is always a solution. What the church ought to be and what it is, is an ambiguity underlined by John Stott:

The image of the church is extremely ambiguous, for there is a paradox at the heart of the church is the painful tension between what the church claims to be and what it seems to be, between the divine ideal and the human reality, between romantic talk about the bride of Christ and the very unromantic, ugly, unholy and quarrelsome Christian community we know ourselves to be.<sup>19</sup>

Where there is a tension, there is a need. Stott sees the reality of a tension between what the church claims to be and what it is, and this is not an easy tension to resolve. Yet, as a believer who knows the Word of God, this writer maintains that there is a solution. The gap can be filled. What this work develops is a way to resolve the threat. Other writers have placed education as a core solution to the problems that the church in Africa is facing. An article on the website of Entreculturas is one of them: "We think education is a key tool in order to reduce the vulnerable position of millions of people in the world. The education we believe in, enables job opportunities, self esteem and social awareness for change."<sup>20</sup> Howe and Wallin have made a statement on the purpose of education that is similar: "The purpose of education is to gain the knowledge and skills

---

<sup>19</sup> John Stott, *Calling Christian Leaders: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel, and Ministry* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2002), 17.

<sup>20</sup> Entre Culturas, "Why Is the Lack of Education a Priority Problem?" Entre Culturas, 2009. <http://www.entreculturas.org>, (accessed October 19, 2009).



necessary to make informed and reasonable decisions.”<sup>21</sup> The article released by the World Bank about the benefit of education has touched the basics of the solution Africa needs today. “Education is central to development. It empowers people and strengthens nations. It is a powerful ‘equalizer,’ opening doors to all to lift themselves out of poverty.”<sup>22</sup> That article continues:

[Education] improves health and nutrition. Education greatly benefits personal health. Education increases productivity and earnings. It reduces inequality. Education is a great ‘leveler,’ illiteracy being one of the strongest predictors of poverty. Education drives economic competitiveness. An educated and skilled workforce is one of the pillars of the knowledge-based economy.<sup>23</sup>

The arguments of this article are relevant because people who cannot afford minimum requirements for health and nutrition remain an unproductive people. This is a fact applicable to people in nations but also in a reduced measure to the church. This writer believes that education is central to the well-being to humans and to the healthy growth of the church.

Along with these strong statements about the positive effect of education, one might also say that education must be more than a priority. Church leaders in Burkina Faso bring many people to Christ, but the quality of nurture is poor because they give only what they have. Because the leaders have limited education and limited vision, the growth of congregants is also limited. As a

---

<sup>21</sup>Tim Howe, and A. P. Wallin, “The Purpose of Education,” Quadium Net, January 19, 2000, Tuesday January 25, [http://quadium.net/school/purpose\\_education.html](http://quadium.net/school/purpose_education.html), (accessed October 19, 2009).

<sup>22</sup>The World Bank, “Education and Development,” The World Bank Group, 2009, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:20591648~menuPK:1463858~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:282386,00.html>, accessed October 19, 2009.

<sup>23</sup>The World Bank, “Education and Development.”

result, sin and bad behaviors are evident in the churches. The mixture of faith and superstition generates syncretism, which pollutes the church. One of the origins of the problem is then in the weaknesses of those in charge of the sheep. If lack of vision contributes to hindrances, the main problem is a lack of good training. A proverb says, "Someone cannot give what he doesn't have."

The latest evaluations (2009) from Assemblies of God of Burkina Faso show that pastors are far less educated than are the typical Burkinabe. Of the estimated population of 15,000,000, 65 percent of adults in Burkina Faso are illiterate. All the 3,600 pastors are literate, but less than 20 percent of them have a primary school certificate. Less than 5 percent have an undergraduate degree, and less than 1 percent have earned a master's degree. At present, three have earned their doctorate, and four are in the process. Only a few pastors plan to continue their education throughout their lives. The cost of education is high, and they cannot afford it. Until recently, external studies courses have not been available, but even when those courses exist, only a handful of pastors can afford them. Because their ministries place them in key leadership positions in all areas of the country and their responsibilities give no excuse for mediocrity, pastors are the logical focus of continuing education programs. In order for the church to fulfill its duty in this century, a continuing education program is a priority. What is needed for church leaders in Burkina Faso is not advanced education in theology but basic, continuing training that imparts knowledge of the Bible. The process in education follows a program that respects the level of life and education of each people. Advanced education is fit for those who are in

charge of the training. In this context, basic teaching that can be understood by the people and easy to learn and practice is needed. The church, through the Société Internationale de Linguistique (SIL) and the Association Nationale pour la Traduction de la Bible en Afrique (ANTBA) must be congratulated for its effort of help many African tribes to have the Bible in their own languages. That great effort is envisioned for personal learning, private and collective.

The continuing education program of Burkina Faso is set for pastors. They are key leaders who can effectively lead people to maturity. Training that equips local pastors with knowledge and tools in their context and in their native languages is needed. They are surely in good position to transfer what they have learned to the believers. The future of the church depends on the quality of its leaders.

The goal of this ministry is to prepare leaders in key positions in the local churches to help the body of Christ. That can balance numerical growth with spiritual maturity. Many manufacturers understand the need for continuing education. They often sponsor training in order to upgrade their workers' knowledge. Why cannot this be done by the church? The gospel never changes, but it wears the colors and the method of each age. Christians in many churches are still in an elementary stage in their Christian life development, and the evidence is their easy reversion to the carnal life.

Social and cultural pressures, poverty, the low level of education, and a fast-growing church mean that something must be done. An old African expression says, "Instead of chasing out the danger which is already in your

house, tackle it before it gets in.” But in this case, the threat is already in the church. Growth is evident, but it must be matched with spiritual maturity. The limited training that pastors have no longer fits with the new realities they face. A continuing education program could also provide pastors with ways to help believers improve their standard of living, resist pressure from other religions, and break down the strongholds in their lives.

As an example of vulgarizing continuing education, at the first wave of missionary efforts in Burkina Faso, one missionary who arrived in a district shifted in his ministry paradigm. Instead of taking care of spiritual matters only, he decided to initiate a small development project. He took time to teach people some management skills. His fellow missionaries opposed his strategy, but his efforts improved the living conditions of the believers in this district and raised the income of the church, which needed money for its expansion efforts. This district has contributed to the development of the national church by sending and supporting more people in Bible schools and providing funds for church building and missionary efforts.

Church leaders who understand the need have elaborated programs for mass training through conventions, seminars, and so on. This mass training strategy works and produces results. Some pastors notice the difference in their ministry even after one- or two-week training sessions, but these sessions are not yet spread all over the country. In the next chapter, more information about educational programs will be given.

## **Conclusion**

Training for local church leaders is more than needed in fast-growing churches and in a changing world. The need for balance between the rapid growth of the church and spiritual maturity is real. The focus of this thesis is to describe and show how an integrated model of training for local church leaders in Burkina Faso can balance numerical growth with spiritual maturity.

Chapter 2 will review and analyze the biblical and theological framework, starting with a general overview of biblical formation and the identification of some foundational principles of biblical formation.

The third chapter provides a literature review based on significant works related to the historical and philosophical development of the training program.

Chapter 4 is what the continuing program is doing: the content of the program, the course notes, the meeting places, the target people in the training program, the human resources involved, and the sources of finances.

Through twelve years, the program has adapted in response to needs and changes in the environment. In order to excel in this ministry and meet the core needs of pastors, it was necessary to contextualize the organization and the methodology.

Chapter 5 will evaluate of the program and assess the result of the training in the churches and in the personal lives of local leaders. Feedback already received from local church leaders or solicited from leaders will be interpreted. The results of the evaluation may supply useful information for improvements in the continuing training program that will meet the real needs of the churches and

reach the goal of nurturing a healthy church that balances growth with spiritual maturity. Suggestions and recommendations for further development of the program are the part of this chapter. Even if some results are already capitalized in this decade, the greatness of the task that is still undone suggests many changes for the future of the training program. These suggestions will show the path for a better continuing training program that attains its objectives.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

In this chapter, the first task is to develop a foundation and an understanding of the process of training in the biblical context. First to be considered is the pattern of training set forth in the Old Testament and its possible effect on the continuing education program initiated in Burkina Faso. Next, training patterns in the New Testament take into consideration the methods of Jesus Christ, the disciples, and Paul the apostle. Christian formation is a duty for the followers of Christ, and the biblical model is an integrated model of Christian formation. The focus on Christian formation and discipleship weaves throughout the Bible and is not defined only in any one biblical book or passage. Christian education in the Bible is presented through the diversity of authors, contexts, and audiences of the texts. The classroom approach in the Bible is not the only approach to teaching and training. It includes relational feedback and outside assignments; the development of what is learned is a part of the daily work activity. The diversity of methods that God uses to inculcate his knowledge in people is like a puzzle for Bible students. The knowledge of God provided in all generations, his dwelling among his people, and the imparting of salvation are useful elements and patterns.

## **God's Education Methods in the Old Testament and the Possible Effect on Continuing Education Programs**

Teaching for change and maturity is the main priority of this author's church, and the Bible presents patterns that might help in understanding better an effective method of training. God pioneered the first training program by visiting Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. During these visits, God surely imparted information that Adam and Eve needed to live well on the newly created earth. This knowledge was essential for their well-being and for a good relationship with God, their Creator (Gen 2:15-17). Even though the contents of their exchanges are not revealed, God's coming to them so often instead of waiting for them to come to him is an example and a good method for teachers to implement. In addition, the sacrifice made by God for the first man and woman shows how God inculcated knowledge in humankind about how worship should please God (Gen 3:21).

Maintaining the relationship between human and God was primordial, but in regard of the holiness of God, Hebrews 9:22 presents the necessity of shedding of blood. God's action here is surely motivated by his eternal love, and that action is also a guide for humankind to satisfy the holiness of God. That action can be seen as foundational and a training, not only for the people of the Old Testament but also for the ones of the New Testament, even if the Lamb has expiated the sin of the world. The basic element of the action of God here is its educational aspect: humans needed to satisfy requirement of God and set a new and good relationship with the Creator.



Darby Eldridge, in *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, points out how God the Father taught through the patriarchs. Abraham, a man of culture and superior intelligence, discovered that God is the only God and should be the only one to be worshiped. Education in the time of the patriarchs was natural and informal, accomplished through example:

The wandering nomads had not established schools, but they modeled their beliefs in the daily activities. What Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did in relationship to God, in like manner their children learned and did the same in their relationship to God. Everything they learned came from the great lives of their distinguished fathers.

The effectiveness of Abraham's teaching is evident in Isaac, who was completely obedient to the will of God even in the face of death. He responded to God's request for an acceptable offering as his great father taught him. Abraham's example inspired emulation in Isaac's total obedience to Almighty God.

Isaac and Jacob continued to be obedient to the teachings of Abraham and transmitted them to their children. In the end each of them received a confirmation from God of the covenant delivered to Abraham. Surely this covenant would not have continued with Isaac and Jacob had they been untrue to the teachings of God.<sup>1</sup>

The children of the patriarchs learned through the daily activities of their parents; the example set by the parents influenced the daily lives of their children.

Eldridge furthers his study by developing the section about God as teacher in the Pentateuch. Although Moses received fine educational training in Egypt, the education received from his biological mother was the foundation in his life. Through him, "God taught the children of Israel a great lesson about his mighty

---

<sup>1</sup> Darby Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 4-5.

power through experience of the Passover. He commanded the people and all the succeeding generations to celebrate this memorable day.”<sup>2</sup> He continues,

The central core of Jewish education was the Law given at Sinai. It regulated every feature of life: how to operate in the home, how to dress, what to eat, how to work, personal conduct, the possession of property, political involvement, civil life, and especially religious life. The Law regulated education, and if it had been completely followed it would have led Israel to a successful inhabitation of the land of promise. Even with their failure, the people of Israel have remained a distinct people because of their adherence to the instructions of the Torah.<sup>3</sup>

This is an example for anyone who wants to please God. Biblical education brings peace, healing, and success to anyone no matter where he or she lives.

Even if the education Moses has received in Egypt made him a good leader, Jethro, his father-in-law, also played a key role in making him a better leader. Moses learned the art of delegation from Jethro, as is evidenced in Exodus 18:14: “What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and the people stand before you from morning until evening?”<sup>4</sup> Jethro says to Moses, “The thing that you do is not good. Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself.”

The teaching of children that God mandated in the Israelites’ culture was a pattern that was supposed to bring positive changes in the society. The mother was to teach the children while performing her household duties. Hebrew fathers considered their responsibility for teaching their children their most important

---

<sup>2</sup> Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 7.

task. Much attention was given to memorizing the Mosaic law and the oral traditions of the people of God. Knowledge of these matters was considered to be the ability to repeat it unerringly. Although Hebrew education was almost totally religious education, the father was also to teach his son a trade. However, the parents did not carry the sole responsibility for education. The priestly tribe of Levi was commanded to go before the people at the Feast of Tabernacles “so they can listen and learn to fear the Lord your God and follow carefully all the words in the law” (Deut 31:12 NIV). The priests were to be the nation’s educators. The priests also had to teach the people how to live together, and they remained the primary public educators of the nation until the exile.<sup>5</sup>

Lessons can also be drawn from the miracles that God performed for Israel in the desert. It seems that God took time at every level of life to let the people learn from his deeds. It is true that dealing with humanity is like dealing with failure, but God’s perseverance in pursuing his works produced fruits. God’s love urges him to never forsake humankind.

In his burst of love and in perpetuating the knowledge of God, God advised Moses to emphasize training the next generation. “Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when he said to me, “Assemble the people before me

---

<sup>5</sup> James E. Reed and Ronnie Prevost, *A History of Christian Education* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 56.

to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children.” (Deut 4:9-10 NIV).

“Teach them to your children and to their children after them” (Deut 4:9) is not mere vain repetition. The purpose of God in repeating and persevering is to remind his people of the ways to please him and to have a better life on earth. Training was woven into all the parts of Israel’s life. This pattern shows how important training is, from the family to all levels of society.

A pattern of education is still visible during the monarchy. The training King David received before he became king is considered a classic by all generations. At every level of David’s life, God used someone or circumstances to keep or bring David back to the right way. God still uses this process to warn his children and to call them back to him. That is what a continuing training program is for this generation.

Eldridge has emphasized that “education in the monarchy cannot be totally understood until the vast instruction capacity of King Solomon is taken into consideration.”<sup>6</sup> The writings of Solomon played a major role in the life of the people. This wisdom has practical import, with its main subject being the fear of the Lord. Of this wisdom Robert W. Pazmiño writes,

God imparts wisdom and the people are dependent upon God’s grace for any claim to wisdom. Therefore, wisdom that is apart from or inconsistent with the truths of God’s revelation must be suspect and questioned. Education at its best must be God-centered, seeing God as the source. Educators are called to integrate all areas of knowledge with God’s revelation.

A second implication is that education should have an impact upon people’s lives and should enable them to grapple with the practical consequences of those truths studied or discerned. . . .

---

<sup>6</sup> Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 15.

A third implication for education is that those who are identified as teachers must be evaluated in terms of the extent to which they give evidence of having received the gift of wisdom from God. Teachers are ultimately responsible to God for the use of their gifts and responsible to students in sharing the fruits of their insights.<sup>7</sup>

Any understanding of the Word of God must be transferred into daily living—obedience to the Word of God. Obedience to God's Word is the evidence that the continuing education program to be implemented looks for.

One of the many interesting things the reader of the Bible perceives is the step-by-step efforts of God in bringing back his people to him. God's education program in the Old Testament changes according to the generation and the need. When the priests began to pervert the spiritual dimension of worship in the temple, the place of education shifted. When the priests and the monarchs failed to function in Israel and Judah, God raised up prophets to fill the gap. At the failure of Eli to play his role as priest and as a father who must give a good example, God raised up Samuel to continue the ministry of educating the people (1 Sam 1–2). "Samuel the prophet became the center of education and remained so until the destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem."<sup>8</sup> What God did at that time is a lesson for any generation on the necessity of education for the best. The prophets drew many people back to God. The schools of prophets were tools to perpetuate knowledge of God and to promote God's Word. In each generation, God raised prophets to warn and teach his people.

Probably no nation has ever produced a group of religious and moral teachers comparable with the prophets of ancient Israel.

---

<sup>7</sup> Robert W. Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education: An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 29.

<sup>8</sup> Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 16.

Through their spoken public addresses and writings they became creators of national religious and social ideals, critics and inspirers of public policies, denunciators of social wrongs, preachers of individual and social righteousness, and the source and channel of an ever loftier conception of God and the mission of Israel. In fulfilling each of these capacities they were acting as public teachers. In every national crisis they were at hand to denounce, to encourage, to comfort and always to instruct. They were the public conscience of Israel, the soul of its religion, the creators of its public opinion, its most conspicuous, its most revered, its most convincing teachers.<sup>9</sup>

Truly the prophets were tools in God's education program. They were bold to speak even when the situation was challenging. This was the continuing education program of that time, and today's program lays its foundation on their methods. Another lesson to be drawn here is the key role God played in the daily life of his people. There are many examples here for today's leaders who must set up programs and provide finances for the task in order to save this generation.

The exile of Israel in Babylon is not to be considered only as a punishment; instead, one must also recognize its socio-theological and spiritual purposes of transforming the people's lives. The spiritual lesson of the exile was to bring Israel out of its context, to let the people realize for themselves the importance of maintaining a relationship with the one true God.

When a remnant of Israel returned to its land, Ezra set out a training pattern when the people came to him in order to listen to the Word of God. "For Ezra has devoted himself to the study and observance of the law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel" (Ezra 7:10 NIV). The need of today's

---

<sup>9</sup> Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 16.

generation is for leaders like Ezra, who will set up programs and be good educators. When Ezra was a priest and a scribe in Israel, Nehemiah played a role as governor. He was the kind of governor who knew how to stimulate people to stand and accomplish a task. It is amazing to see how God raised up people in all generations to maintain the flame of his knowledge.

After the exile and the destruction of the temple, it became necessary for each Jewish community to establish a place for meeting. As a result, synagogues became the central place of instruction,<sup>10</sup> and adult education was a responsibility of the synagogue. The synagogue was a place where Jewish men could read, contemplate, and discuss the Law. The synagogue became so important to Jewish education that one was found in almost every city with ten Jewish males.<sup>11</sup> Just as the synagogues were tools to help maintain spiritual life in Israel, so today's education programs must help leaders in every village and city to maintain a good spiritual life in Christian congregations.

### **Training Patterns in the New Testament**

The knowledge of God provided in all generations, his dwelling among humans, and the imparting of salvation are basic elements that prove that God gives priority to transforming people's lives, and transformation is done through training. In the Old Testament, God used diverse methods to inculcate knowledge of him in his people, but in the New Testament, the reader sees a paradigm shift. The dwelling and the integration of the Master in the midst of the

---

<sup>10</sup> Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 17.

<sup>11</sup> Reed and Prevost, *A History of Christian Education*, 63.



people called for a different teaching method. In *The Training of the Twelve*, A. B.

Bruce pointed out the daily fellowship the Master had with his disciples:

From the time of their being chosen, the twelve entered on a regular apprenticeship for the great office of apostleship, in the course of which they were to learn, in the way of an intimate daily fellowship with their Master, what they should be, do, believe, and teach, as His ambassadors to the world. Henceforth, the training of these men was to be a constant and prominent part of Christ's work.<sup>12</sup>

Jesus spent much of his time teaching the Twelve, and the impact of the gospel in the world today is the result the good training his disciples received. Jesus did not focus only on the teaching of the Twelve; he also had contact with the people. The behavior of the crowds, exposing people's spiritual needs, was seen by the Master. That made him work more in order to quench the spiritual thirst of the people. The relevance of his teaching is indicated by considering the crowds at his teaching sessions. He was connected with the people of his time. He was the kind of teacher whose teaching changes life. Mark 6:32-34 tells one of the many touching stories of Jesus' ministry: So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things (NIV).

In Jesus' time, teaching was relegated to a secondary rank for worldly reasons. When the spiritual needs of people are not met, their wandering may cause disaster. But human spiritual thirst cannot be quenched by hollow words.

---

<sup>12</sup> A. B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971), 30.



The eagerness of the crowds to be with Jesus is an expression of needs not met by the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus' ministry, by contrast, offered a definitive way to quench the people's spiritual thirst.

Kaye Johns gives a summary of the methods used by Jesus in his teaching ministry:

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus taught His disciples the fundamentals of faith in God, the basics of prayer, the necessity of a daily quiet time, a model or pattern for prayer, the promise that those who ask, seek and knock will receive abundantly from a heavenly Father Whose very nature is to hear and answer prayer.

It was perhaps a year later that Jesus moved from teaching the basic, beginning steps of prayer to something more advanced—persistence and boldness [Luke 11:5-8; 18:1-8]. It wasn't until the end of His ministry that Jesus gave the twelve disciples His incredible "you can have whatever you ask" promises to be used in advancing His kingdom.

The sequence of Jesus' teaching on prayer is important because those new to prayer can't fully comprehend the necessity of persistence or the conditions required for the prayer promises. It is as though Jesus was teaching three courses on prayer—beginner, intermediate, advanced. We can't leap into advanced prayer without preparation and expect to be effective, any more than we can expect to do well in third year French without first mastering years one and two. The important thing is to begin at the beginning, and stay with it.<sup>13</sup>

Such a method is relevant and at the level of comprehension of the people. For a continuing education program to be effective, a good adaptation of Jesus' method is more than needed.

The methods of Jesus were different from those of all the teachers that Israel knew. Instead of doing as the contemporary religious leaders did, Jesus decided to give more attention to those who were excluded in society: women,

---

<sup>13</sup> Kaye Johns, "Is There a Pattern to Jesus' Teaching on Prayer?" Prayer Power Ministries, 2008-2005, [http://www.learntoprayer.org/print\\_materials/messages/d17/d17-1.htm](http://www.learntoprayer.org/print_materials/messages/d17/d17-1.htm) (accessed September 12, 2009).

the poor, tax collectors. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were greatly disturbed by the company Jesus kept: "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them" (Luke 15:2 NIV). Yet, Jesus manifested God's compassion by being responsive to the needs of the people he met every day. He taught by example, and this example has been a catalyst for the faith of those he leads.

The method used by Jesus in his teaching ministry serves also as a perfect example for those who follow him. A brief list of what the Master did in his ministry, according to the four Gospels, follows:

1. He went where the people were (Mark 1:16; 1:21-22; Matt 14:34-36).
2. He showed consideration to the needy, women, lepers, and tax collectors (Mark 8:22; Luke 5:12).
3. He was accustomed to arouse the curiosity of people when he had contact with them. Anyone had the possibility of coming to him.
4. Because he knew the people and their context, his teaching was relevant and appropriate, and the result was evident in the immediate reaction of people.

Jesus' teaching ministry had a great effect on people. Mark 6 says that the people ran from everywhere to hear Jesus. That fact means his teaching had a great impact on them. Nicodemus came to Jesus in order to know more about a significant subject. Jairus went against the culture of that time to plead for help, and Jesus met his need (Luke 8:40-56). The need to quench spiritual thirst has pushed many people to ignore social and cultural barriers. The only thing they needed was to know the truth and the solution to their problems. Because of the

relevant methods that Jesus used, his teaching was understood and well accepted. The continuing education program in Burkina Faso attempts to replicate this kind of contact and these methods in order to get the same results Jesus got.

On the matter of continuity, a saying in the author's tribal language summarizes what the disciples did after the departure of the Master: "Yuug ka rogd ti ka a yi-uu ye" ("Cats give birth to nothing other than cats"). After Jesus' ascension, teaching was a major consideration in the apostolic church. "The role of the apostles as educators in the primitive church was obviously important as well as formative. Luke recorded that, following Pentecost, those who believed 'devoted themselves to the apostles' teachings' (Acts 2:42)."<sup>14</sup> The decision of the apostles in Acts 6 to concentrate their efforts only on the teaching ministry is an example. The need for training was obvious, and they saw it. James E. Reed and Ronnie Prevost summarize the importance that the disciples gave to teaching and how they responded to the false teaching propagated by Judaizers and others.

Teaching was a major consideration in the apostolic church. Paul, Peter, John, and Jude all wrote about false teachers (both Judaizers and Gnostics) warning believers to be aware of heretical teaching. James echoed the teaching of Jesus by cautioning teachers of their great responsibility: "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly" (James 3:1).<sup>15</sup>

The decision of the apostolic church to give priority to teaching is because teaching is a means of spiritual growth, and the church dealt with a time of rapid

---

<sup>14</sup> Reed and Prevost, *A History of Christian Education*, 71.

<sup>15</sup> Reed and Prevost, *A History of Christian Education*, 73.

growth after Pentecost. The apostles' decision to devote themselves to the ministry of teaching surely influenced the deacons, who later devoted themselves to specific ministries (e.g., evangelists and teachers; Philip and Stephen are good examples). Such devoutness is needed in today's churches. The ministry of deacons is still needed, but some of them must not remain in that status for the rest of their lives.

The law of continuity was also respected in the ministry of Paul. The apostle Paul spent much of his time training leaders and believers. The church in Corinth is one example of Paul taking time to strengthen the faith of believers:

Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized. One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city. So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God. (Acts 18:8-11 NIV)

Paul's encounter with the leaders of Ephesus shows how he bore the well-being of the people in his heart. His speech here is that of a teacher pouring out the contents of his heart:

I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus. (Acts 20:19-21 NIV)

Paul's pattern of training is still the basic foundation for any continuing training program, and his epistles remain the main handbooks for continuing

education. Even if his writings are theological, counseling and recommendations mark his thoughts. One of his recommendations to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2 is basic to a teaching ministry: "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others (NIV)."

The qualification of Paul as a teacher was remarkable. One can fully agree with the difference between a pastor and a deacon, as noted by James Reed.

The ability to teach was required in pastoral leadership. Paul gave both Timothy and Titus a list of qualifications of a bishop or pastor. One of the major differences in the qualities required in a pastor and those of a deacon was the ability to teach (1 Tim 3:2). When Paul listed the four gifted leaders for the churches in Ephesians 4:11, he identified one of the four as pastor-teacher. The church leaders had the responsibility to equip believers for their ministries. The teaching ministry of the church has always been an integral part of God's plan for spreading the gospel and changing lives. Paul's closing words to Timothy capture this concept: "The thing you . . ." (2 Tim 2:2).<sup>16</sup>

This is exactly what the education program in the church of Burkina Faso intends to do. Teaching will be elaborated by teachers in their context in order to equip local church leaders.

The Pastoral Epistles set out the specific program for ministers in general. The relevancy of these handbooks is evident from the early church on to the other generations. The stability of the church is strongly related to the content of these books. No minister can turn up his nose at these practical handbooks.

Like Paul with the churches at Ephesus, Peter's ministry in the early church placed him in a position to stimulate leaders to lead the flock in God's

---

<sup>16</sup> Reed and Prevost, *A History of Christian Education*, 74.

way. To the beginning church and a church going through persecution, Peter encouraged Christians in his writings and gave instruction to the elders. Even though he identified with them, he warned the churches about the fiery ordeal that would come upon them for their testing (1 Pet 4:12). His warnings against some typical failures in the elders of that day are also relevant to this generation.

One can conclude this section saying that the diversity of methods used from Genesis to Peter has only one focus: to educate people in the knowledge of God. The methods played a key role in the training process that carries messages for the restoration of relationship between human and God.

### **The Holy Spirit as Teacher**

At a first glance, teaching is by humans addressing humans, using human methods to convey God's Word. The medium and the methods are both useful, but the readiness to receive the message is beyond human control. Pazmiño comments well on the role of that person in the process of education:

The issue of adequately assessing the readiness of participants in Christian education efforts is complex and can be overwhelming when one considers the wide variety of variables that influence persons individually, corporately, and contextually. Yet there is a resource person who is available to Christian educators for this task. That person is the Holy Spirit.<sup>17</sup>

A Christian cannot do anything without the Holy Spirit. The third person of the Trinity is the most important person in the process of teaching and learning. As long as teaching is a spiritual task, it requires spiritual power. That is why Jesus

---

<sup>17</sup> Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 39.

made this promise: "If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you (John 14:15-17 NIV).

The Holy Spirit directs the church in all of its actions with the goal of proclaiming and firmly establishing the kingdom of God. The task of the Holy Spirit is to build the church by strengthening the faith of believers and animating and sanctifying the body of Christ (2 Cor 5:6).

The Holy Spirit is the first author of the holy Scriptures. All Scriptures are divinely inspired (2 Tim 3:16), and the Spirit is essential in Christian teaching. John 16:13 "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come." Anyone who commits to the guidance of the Holy Spirit will be taught by the Spirit and will see things from the Spirit's perspective. The ministry of the Holy Spirit brings believers to the process of becoming more like Christ.

The Holy Spirit instructs both the teacher and the listener so they can perform the task they are called to do. He brings to remembrance the teaching of the Scripture. The Holy Spirit teaches people by using other people as a medium; this medium, that is, the human teacher, relies on the power of the Spirit to accomplish the ministry to be done. The Holy Spirit encourages people to cooperate in his work within the church and in the world. Because of his ministry,



the church is able to accomplish its teaching role. Eldridge says that “Christians are fortunate to have the author of the greatest book in the world to take up residence in us. The Bible’s author is at our immediate disposal to help us interpret and understand Scripture.”<sup>18</sup> Eldridge continues, “Training disciples involves three steps. The learners observe, practice what they have learned, then teach others.”<sup>19</sup> This is what is seen in the process of continuing education of Burkina Faso, and this is the goal all teachers would like to reach. Training for maturity is to see believers standing firm in the faith and being able to reproduce members.

Training in the biblical context is a foundation that helps understand the process of training. In this chapter, readers saw from the Old Testament to the New how the process of training is conducted. The goal of the efforts in the Old Testament and in the New Testament and the diversity of methods is to see progress in the life of the learner. The nature of Christian education is to instruct and bring people to conversion, and, more than that, to help them to be on the path of maturity. The final goal for all these efforts is to see Christ-likeness in the churches. Where there is true conversion, the aftereffect will be what is seen in the book of Acts: a strong church in which spiritual life is evident and everybody is fully engaged to promote the kingdom of God.

The chapter that follows is the literature review. In this chapter, books and materials that are connected with the subject will be identified, summarized, and

---

<sup>18</sup> Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 47.

<sup>19</sup> Eldridge, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, 81.



analyzed. Significant works are related to the historical and philosophical development of the training program in Burkina Faso.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The objective of this literature review is to provide an understanding of continuing education. Literature related to Christian formation and the needs of local leaders in Christian education will be reviewed. The first group of books is reviewed because of their approach to the continuing education for adults. These authors have contributed in different manners to promoting not only Christian education but also education in general. Most of these writers agree on the transformative power of adult education. Adults' concepts cannot be easily changed because those concepts are fixed in their tender age. But these authors recognize the fact that even if a concept is fixed long in the past, changes can still be made through adult formation and training, if good methods are employed.

The second section of this chapter deals with the role of the teacher in the process of adult education. The teacher plays a key role in the process of education. It is his role to prompt the cognitive system of learners by different methods so that they may find the need to analyze and find alternative values that can boost them in work and in life. It is necessary to recognize also the fact that the task of adult education is sometimes the correction or extension of old knowledge, but more often the task is to inculcate new knowledge.

The continuing education program of Burkina Faso is designed to meet needs in the ministries of local church leaders. It aims at keeping the local leaders' ministry alive and productive. It is an antidote to the sleepiness and immaturity that is demonstrated by some Christians. Within this author's context,

the system of sessions is useful and practical for people who get their living through agricultural and bush activities. Training upgrades the capacity of the local leaders and provides knowledge for effectiveness.

### **The Necessity of Transformational, Continuing Education**

Transformative learning theory is an adult-education-based theory that suggests ways in which adults make meaning of their lives. Writing on the transformative dimensions of adult learning, Jack Mezirow alluded to the thought of Karl Popper by saying, "We learn in order to change the structure of our expectation rather than to fill in gaps in knowledge. New knowledge resulting from problem solving is a correction rather than an extension of old knowledge."<sup>1</sup> Popper's idea is compatible with transformative theory. This transformative theory is a basis of the adult education program that is being implemented in Burkina Faso. There is no need to learn just to learn or to fill a gap. Adult education is designed to solve a problem. Knowledge is useful only if it is of benefit to the one who possesses it and to those with whom people live. The local church leader in the village he serves is often considered an important person who possesses everything. He is consulted about all kinds of problems that people encounter. He is seen as different because he is one who has traveled, and a traveler has seen more than one who has never gone out of his village. The pastor is the one who has received education, and because of that his standard of living is different from that of bush people. His position of

---

<sup>1</sup> Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 39.

leadership makes him a light that lights many people's lives. Not only believers but many others may be led astray if he has no good basis of knowledge.

Mezirow deepens his thought by putting Popper's theory on the same level with Gestalt theory. Gestalt psychology theorists view learning as a problem-solving activity. They define a problem as a difficulty in achieving a goal. Any new knowledge involves a negation and transformation of past beliefs. One can even say that Gestalt theory may also be the title of the continuing education program in Burkina Faso because the program is a problem-solving activity. The program deals not only with past concepts and beliefs but also inculcates useful information in adult life. Mezirow's book is a great contribution not only to the development of this project but to the continuing education program also.

While Popper focused on the generation of knowledge, Jean Piaget believed that intellectual development may involve the rejection of some false views, but he did not hold the negation of beliefs to be the central dynamic of progress, as Popper did and as transformation theorists do. To Piaget, gaining higher-level skills does not involve rejection of the lower; rather, lower-level skills are incorporated into the higher-level ones. Skills can fall into disuse but cannot be rejected.<sup>2</sup> The continuing education program is in line with Piaget's view. When the first missionaries came to the Mossi, they found a people with a rich culture. These missionaries used the positive aspects of that culture to teach biblical ethics. That is to recognize that even if the Bible has higher moral values, the traditions are not to be totally rejected. The teachers selected in the continuing education program today respect the missionaries' methods because

---

<sup>2</sup>Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*, 39-41.

those methods help them to build good basis of knowledge that is easy for Africans to understand and to apply.

Mark Rouch's *Competent Ministry: A Guide to Effective Continuing Education* is a practical handbook designed for pastors, Christian educators, and other professional church leaders. He recognizes continuing education as an essential tool in an authentic and effective ministry. The author agrees with the main trend among program developers: continuing education is practical, especially if one is dealing with adult learners. The differences in context, methods, and resources enrich the content of the program and give a broad diversity to continuing education. Rouch, like most guideline writers, states that a continuing education program begins when basic formal education ends and continues throughout one's career and beyond. This is true when a basic formal education is gained. In places where education is oral and limited, the continuing education program plays a key role on both sides: to teach the basics and to also new information.

IEquip's vision for training is almost like the one for local church leaders in Burkina Faso. The vision is clear and understandable and presented in three points:

- To equip international Christian leaders to effectively serve the growing body of Christ around the world.
- To see effective Christian leaders fulfill the Great Commission in every nation.

- To provide strategic leadership training through conferences, resources, partnerships, and technology.<sup>3</sup>

The continuing education department in Burkina Faso may found a partnership with IEQUIP that is international. A good partnership would reinforce the effectiveness of the program.

Beyond the theory of transformation and the basics of a program of adult continuing education, P. T. Chandapilla has touched on the fundamental problem noted by leaders in Burkina Faso. He identifies the problem of leadership as a problem of immaturity and sees the problem of nominal Christianity as a crisis of leadership. He says,

The problem with the nominal Christian church is a crisis of leadership; the problem with the non-Christian religions is that they have asserting personalities. Assertion comes with growing and even sometimes when people are not grown they still utter. The crisis of leadership comes first from false theology, liberalizing the gospel, personalizing it, demythologizing it, biologizing it—and before long you are deep-freezing it. The second problem, or the second reason for a crisis of leadership is that we have too many shepherds. . . . These shepherds are mainly interested in eating most of the grass.<sup>4</sup>

Chandapilla's judgment is correct, because there are leadership problems in many places. The welfare of a group depends mostly on the capacity of a leader to lead. How can a blind person can lead others, and how worse will it be if a blind person leads other blind people? Chandapilla has touched the right point

---

<sup>3</sup> Equip, "Mission and Vision," Equip, 2008, <http://www.iequip.org/ce/index.php?module=ContentExpress&func=display&ceid=10&mid=-1> (accessed September 12, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> P. T. Chandapilla, "Opposition, Nominal Christianity, and Non-Christian Religions," address at the Urbana Missionary Convention, 1964, [http://www.urbana.org/\\_artiles.cfm?RecordId=703](http://www.urbana.org/_artiles.cfm?RecordId=703) (accessed September 12, 2009).

because the problem of leadership is at the basis of the cry of many pastors who came for help.

Chandapilla sees the crisis of nominal Christianity as a problem of leadership,

but A. G. Pyman sees the solution of the problem to be education that fits adult.

He has exalted continuing education by pointing out its positive aspects. For him,

Continuing education should aim at keeping people professionally alive and growing and productive. It is an antidote to the sense of alienation felt by those who believe they have reached their professional limits.

There are several ways of implementing this lifetime of progression by education and training, some formal, some informal. The obvious way is by on- and off-site training, particularly at the lower levels. One hopes that this would take place as a matter of course, as it does, for example, in the Forestry Commission and in agriculture and other industries in the United Kingdom.

Similarly, fairly regular attendance at local or regional meetings, seminars, and discussions as in earlier years, will help a man's technical ability as well as his personal development to some extent, but it is the organized courses that will give the most satisfactory results.<sup>5</sup>

In his position as the head of the forestry department at Cumbria College of Agriculture and Forestry (United Kingdom), Pyman has seen the positive effects that continuing education has on those who think they are limited because of their position or their age.

Pyman and Edgecombe say almost the same thing and reinforce the author's efforts in continuing education. For Edgecombe, continuing education promotes the lifelong learning process by offering a wide range of programs and services. These programs and services are designed to meet the needs and

---

<sup>5</sup> A. G. Pyman, "The Need for Continuing Education," FAO, 2007-2009, <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/F6137E/f6137e05.htm> (accessed September 13, 2009).

interests of adults, regardless of their educational background.<sup>6</sup> As long as the content of the program is upgraded and provides improvement in a task, the time and the place of training can be as flexible as possible. That scenario is fit for adults who are already established in life.

The eagerness manifested by local church leaders in finding a solution for the spiritual weakness of the believers is a very good sign; these leaders could have been blinded or remained stubborn while the situation worsened. Richard E. Dodge, in *Teaching Adults: A Guide for Transformational Teaching—Leader Training Guide*, writes that learning occurs when learners decide to accept and incorporate new information into their lives. The principles given are the ones that this author's continuing education program follows. It encourages preparation of the room, because the room is the teaching-learning laboratory. The method of teaching that fits best in a training session with local church leaders is the one Dodge calls into consideration. He insists on teaching the learner how to reflect by giving enough time to process, especially when the information given is new. That method is proven to be effective in assimilation. He advises teachers to allow brief discussion periods, encourage questions, or allow silence with instruction as to how to use the silence to encourage learners to process material. This provides time for learners to consider how the material applies to them. And finally, it is important for the teacher to create an environment in which participants may feel free to express their thoughts. Usually Africans talk by following a pattern and respecting the elders. The elders talk first, and younger

---

<sup>6</sup> Edge Combe, "Continuing Education," Edge Combe, 2009, [http://www.edgecombe.edu/continuing\\_ed/cont\\_ed.htm](http://www.edgecombe.edu/continuing_ed/cont_ed.htm) (accessed September 12, 2009).



people must be careful in whatever they say. But in a learning context, it is important for the participants to know that they will not be misunderstood when they speak freely.

Another idea in Dodge agrees with the author sees in practical life. Learning is accepting new information into daily life. Many Burkinabe used to go to neighboring countries because of better climate conditions and better wages or profits. This immigration is done in order to cope with life. There are big differences between people who have been able to leave their villages, meet other people, and learn about other cultures and those who have never left their villages. After two or three years in another country, people who come back home have a different mentality. The way they perceive life is quite different, and they become a reference for others. They have learned new things by meeting other people and working with them. From this, one can make a connection between what Dodge says about learning as accepting new information and K. Patricia Cross's contribution to the literature of adult education.

Cross sees learning has a lifelong activity, and this lifelong learning is a necessity for everybody. Adult education as seen by Cross is a catalyst to propel people in life. It enhances the trainees' life and improves their ability to work or serve with effectiveness. It is finally a mean of promoting development in many areas.<sup>7</sup>

Cross sees adult education as a means for effectiveness, but Howard G. Hendricks sees learning as a means for change. Hendricks is direct in *Teaching*

---

<sup>7</sup> K. Patricia Cross, *Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981), 37.

*to Change Lives*. His answer to what teaching may cause is clear and powerful. Teaching causes people to learn, and learning is change. Learning means a change in one's thinking, feeling, and behavior. What is seen in many people's lives, and what Burkinabe church leaders expect to see, from the day people come for the first time to training sessions and for few years after, is that these people have learned and applied methods gained in the teaching. Learning means a change takes place in the mind, in the emotions, and in the will of the trainee. For the church in Africa to be able to balance its growth with spiritual maturity, teaching is a priority.

In some places, Hendricks's theory on change may take one or two generations to come about, but this situation is due to oaths made by a generation that affects the future of this group. There are exceptions in life that needed to be considered, and one example is this. During the colonial period in Africa, some people who found that they were not able to stop colonialization or defend themselves against it made oaths, declaring things against anyone in the future who allows new thing or anything from the West to take place in their village. Today, the current generation still fears the consequences of these oaths. That is why patience is necessary when it comes to inculcating new things, especially when these people have alliances with their ancestors. When education is not perceived as positive, it may take more than one generation to bring about change among these people. Even if such resistance occurs only in isolated cases, it is good to consider all the facets of rejection that hinder

development. Hendricks is right in his statements, because teaching causes people to learn, and learning is change.<sup>8</sup>

Findley B. Edge has produced a classic text in Christian education stating that Christian educators' success lies in their ability to establish teaching goals and achieve them. *Teaching for Results* is practical for Sunday school teachers but also for any Christian teachers. For Edge, experience has proven that knowing biblical facts does not necessarily raise a person's level of spiritual development. That is true mostly among those who have access to literature and perhaps have received education. In an effort to find balance between numerical growth and spiritual maturity, this truth must help educators and leaders to be more careful, not training just to train. Spiritual maturity is the final goal, and training sessions are organized to fulfill it. Christian living must show evidences that the Word of God dwells in and is the guide for individual believers. Every local church leader receives training that advances knowledge and equips for effective ministry. When a church has mature believers, the leaders may be satisfied not because they have put knowledge into believers but because believers have been brought to practice what they have learned. Nothing is learned when it is not put in practice in daily life.

The goals articulated by the author are to help believers to grow in the knowledge of Christ and to help them to be among those who obey Christ in all things—and these are good goals to reach. It is not an honor for a teacher or a program, after a decade of effort, to see that the Bible is not well established in

---

<sup>8</sup> Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1987), 45.

believers and concrete evidences prove positive changes are not visible.<sup>9</sup>

Because the final goal is spiritual maturity, good methods and patience can help to bring about positive results, and the learner must also see the need to put into practice daily what he has learned.

*Education That Is Christian*, from Lois E. Lebar, shows the need for education that is Christian. Christianity is at the basis of most of development known in history. Christian schools have provided many Christian leaders, and today they are in good positions in life and in the state. Christian education received in Christian primary and secondary schools follows them in their daily decisions. Education that is Christian promotes moral values that helps boost development. For example, where alcohol is abused, development stagnates also. The development of villages is often different because of this fact. A village with many Christians is progressing better than the one that has only a few or none. Education that is Christian helps not only the soul but also the body. The rate of sickness is sometimes higher among those who do not know Christ. It is the same with the quality of life and the length of life. These few examples from the African context confirm what Lebar develops in her book.

About the learning process, Lebar notes that “factors outside the learner are mainly the teacher, the course of study, the class members, and the room.”<sup>10</sup> The comparison and contrasting of Jesus’ methods his ministry is a manual that is useful in the task of training trainers. Jesus’ encounters with people and how

---

<sup>9</sup> Findley B. Edge, *Teaching for Results* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995), 64.

<sup>10</sup> Lois E. Lebar, *Education That Is Christian*, (Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor, 1995), 36.

he gains the interest and attention of his listeners are lessons that must be learned by trainers today.

In chapter 6, Lebar points out the importance of the teaching-learning process. The step toward spiritual maturity that learners must take is the teaching-learning process. "Unless we discover how people learn, Lebar says, teachers will not be able to teach as they ought."<sup>11</sup>

There are words to consider in today's generation. Faith and obedience are absent today in many Christians' lives. There is a dichotomy between the faith and the daily practices of many believers. It is as if people cannot find a balance between the impact of the Christian faith in believers and numerical growth in the church. In many places, the salvation in Christ that is preached in Africa seems not to be the same as that demonstrated in the Bible. Weaknesses due to a lack of knowledge of the Word of God, cultural hindrances, and lack of quality in the moral and spiritual life of believers impel leaders to do something.

Charles A. Tidwell has stressed the necessity of educational ministry in the church. For him, educational ministry belongs to the nature or essence of a church. He believes that education is a process of developing and cultivating a mentality. Christianity calls for change in life in order to please God and to live well; that is why the training program is the solution for a fast-growing church. Every church is to obey the command of Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20. It is one thing to bring people to salvation, but it is another thing to teach them to obey the Word of God.

---

<sup>11</sup> Lebar. *Education That Is Christian*, 165.

Some theologians are tempted to say that the salvation Africans have is not quite the same as the salvation that Europeans or Asians have received. Why are they tempted to draw this conclusion? Why does the gospel that Africans preach have less impact on people's lives? Why is it difficult to see positive change? Following Tidwell's definition, one can say that the lack of positive changes in some areas results from multiple factors. Cultural strongholds are powerful. It is one thing to believe in Jesus and be saved, but it another thing to live according to God's Word, which is what Jesus asks his disciples to do in Matthew 28:20.

People in Africa have a problem with one of the commands of Jesus. The making of disciples seems to be less difficult than the second command, which is the making of disciples. Although Christianity has been a catalyst for positive change, people's mentality and cultural habits may remain strong even when they receive the gospel. Christ's salvation may be received, but positive effects that are external may be annihilated by bad habits. The Corinthians had the same problem when Paul was writing them his epistle. For him, the gospel has power over all. "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Cor 10:3-6 NIV). For Paul, there are strongholds that keep the effect of the salvation away. Accepting Jesus in one's life is one step, but the second step is obedience. The

blessing of God is always on those who obey the Word of God. Priority must be given to an education ministry in the church because of its impact on people's lives. Where conversions are frequent, Christian education must be focused in order to mature the believers.

Africans know that development and positive changes cannot come from somewhere else. Missionaries have done well their job by bringing the Good News, but today it is Africans who have received Christian education that must strengthen the church and the other institutions on the continent. If it is recognized that believers live longer than the pagans or develop faster than pagans, this must be evident in all the churches. But this cannot be so if Christian education is not a priority in these areas.<sup>12</sup>

Kenneth O. Gangel, in *Building Leaders for Church Education*, agrees that most Christians get their only contact with Christian education through the local church, and for him, such a responsibility necessitates a program of education on the local church level.<sup>13</sup> When this understanding is absent in a church, ignorance of the Bible and lack of genuine commitment to God are the results. According to Jesus' last word on earth, education has been mandated (Matt 28:18-20). Along with Gangel, this author agrees that education for maturity is the task of the church.

Church-based education that is Bible-centered brings believers onto the path of maturity. The evidence of growth in faith is a life change that reflects Jesus' life. Evidence of understanding the Word of God and practice of the truth

---

<sup>12</sup> Charles A. Tidwell, *The Educational Ministry of a Church* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 86.

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth O. Gangel, *Building Leaders for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 74.

received must be perceived. In day-to-day life, believers should be able to relate the truth to all aspects of life.

Gangel outlines educational aims and aspects and shows how the educational program of the church can produce maturity in the lives of people (see figure 2 in Gangel). The foundation of the building is always laid before the roof is put on, but this statement brings into focus some weaknesses among African church leaders. Why do they concentrate only on numerical growth without taking into consideration the necessity for spiritual growth? When this aspect is well seen and understood by local church leaders, the move toward maturity will be strong and visible.<sup>14</sup>

Wilbur O'Donovan's *Introduction to Biblical Christianity from an African Perspective*<sup>15</sup> is an Africanized theology that is practical for Africa. This study considers African culture and relates it to what the Bible teaches. O'Donovan has served more than thirty years in the mission field in East and West Africa as a teacher in many training schools, and his approach is a new one. His book is written in an understandable way, and that pushes many teachers and readers to love his theology. O'Donovan pleads for an authentic theology in Africa; he sees the answer for spiritual growth toward maturity in fast-growing churches to be through literature that is printed and distributed at a low cost so that anyone can afford to buy it.

In the traditional African religious environment, the Bible must be the only guide for the church. O'Donovan has stressed the problems encountered in the

---

<sup>14</sup> Gangel, *Building Leaders for Church Education*, 87.

<sup>15</sup> Wilbur O'Donovan, *Introduction to Biblical Christianity from an African Perspective* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996).



past in building a theology that is biblical and also African. Western methods of thinking did not suit African ways, although Western missionaries have done a tremendous job in planting the church in Africa. It is fair to say that the church was strong and biblical, even if the level of knowledge was not as high as it is today. There are theologians today who have been well educated and therefore able to develop a theology that is relevant and applicable to daily life. A theology that considers the particular culture of Africa but does not compromise it should state only the truth of the Bible. O'Donovan touches on the necessity for African theologians to decide what strategy a local church could adopt in order to help believers make necessary changes.

Byang Kato, the first general secretary of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa (AEA) and vice president of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF), emphasizes the need for African leaders and theologians to come back to biblical principles. It is true that Africa has its own culture, but the deviations that appear today are not taught in the Bible. In his book, Kato provides an update on the perennial concern the Christian church ought to have regarding "unhealthy trends in theology." In the foreword of the book, Billy Graham pointed out that the need for a book like this is everywhere apparent. Around the world and specifically in Africa, there are, increasingly, theological deviations. Perhaps there has been an age of confusion over the meaning of salvation, and what has fostered this is the mood of some world religious leaders to produce unity at all cost. Such a view militates against clear-cut Christian teaching. And whenever doctrinal issues are played down, the Holy Spirit is hampered in his redemptive work; unity then

becomes perilous stagnation. What is needed is a concerted effort to train Africans in the Word of God and motive them to train others.

Quoted by Kato, Charles Ryrie discusses the syncretism that is rampant in the African church. Kato not only critically evaluates the theological problems but also unmask some of the practical ramifications that are being promoted by liberal ecumenism in Africa today. The African church is searching for an identity, and this fact makes the continent fertile soil for syncretism.<sup>16</sup>

Carnegie Samuel Calian says that “theology that does not wrestle with life issues is not worthy of people’s attention in the marketplace. Theology must be more than sharing ignorance. Theology must speak and give insight to the puzzling ambiguities and ethical choices confronted each day by individuals.”<sup>17</sup> In designing objectives, Mark Rouch and Shirley D. McCune also emphasize that fact. In order for a pastor to believe that his ministry is sound, he must make sure he always increases his understanding of the society and his ability to communicate as rapid social and technological changes occur. Ministers must always learn to apply theological concepts and methods to the situations and the people they encounter in their work.

Theology has been a great help, but it is effective only when it relates to church life. To have knowledge for the sake of knowledge makes no sense. Imagine if, after three years of training in a Bible school or a seminary, a local leader is not able to answer to elementary questions people ask in this changing world. Imagine a local leader who is unable to bring about positive change in his

---

<sup>16</sup> Byang Kato, *Theological Pitfalls in Africa* (Kisumu: Evangel Publishing House, 1975).

<sup>17</sup> Carnegie Samuel Calian, *Today's Pastor in Tomorrow's World* (New York: Hawthorn, 1997), 28.

area. What will believers do when the ideas and thought of local leaders make no sense? Preaching and teaching must bring people toward God. A pastor in the twenty-first century should be able to offer a paradigm that is both biblical and relevant. He is the one who masters the roadmap and shows the way. That is why theology that is not helpful to believers is useless. Theology in the African context needed to be practical, dynamic, and inspiring. Guy Ferguson states the issue correctly when he says, "To know how to do a job is the accomplishment of labor. To be available to tell others is the accomplishment of the teacher. To inspire others to do better work is the accomplishment of management. To be able to do all three is the accomplishment of true leaders."<sup>18</sup>

Because local church leaders live in a society that changes rapidly, Leith Anderson gives information on how to cope with the challenges associated with that context. In *A Church for the Twenty-first Century*, this experienced minister gives information that may help leaders who are ready to pay the necessary price for change. Today's structural and societal changes are threats for many pastors. It is necessary for them to know how to cope with change, because yesterday's successes are no guarantee for tomorrow's survival.

Connolly C. Gamble Jr. is a former director of continuing education at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. In *The Report of the Survey*, Gamble answers the question of why continuing education is necessary. The role of a minister demands a sustained program of study, and Gamble emphasizes that fact. In his community, the local pastor belongs to the learned professions, standing in the company of educators, physicians, and lawyers. This demands

---

<sup>18</sup>John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993), 113.

from the pastor a detailed knowledge of the facts related to a particular field of practice.

But the purpose of continuing education is to reach a goal, not for enhancing personal pride. Knowledge received must improve one's life. How many are they who pursue knowledge but with few results or effect in their own lives and those of the people they are living with? In remote African villages, the one who has knowledge is well respected, but what is the effect if the community does not benefit from that knowledge?

Connolly points out the necessity of continuing education, but Hofsmann highlights problems that pastors often face. In *Making the Ministry Relevant*, he has listed ministry inadequacies, the problem of irrelevance, problems of communication, and doctrinal inadequacy for the ministry. He makes relevant points and invites those in positions of responsibility at any level to crave positive change. How can a practitioner in the church ignore such weaknesses and still serve the Lord adequately?

Africa's church core needs teaching that changes people's lives. Ronald G. Held's *Teaching That Makes a Difference* emphasizes the need for effective education, and in his development of the topic, he gives four basic, pertinent points: the need for imparting fruitful knowledge, the need for teaching that brings changes toward a higher living, the perfecting of the field workers by giving them information from the Bible and tools for their ministry, and the necessity to train in

a way that affects life.<sup>19</sup> Lack of knowledge hinders spiritual maturity, and the solution is effective education.

Bill Taylor's principles are tools that assure good results in transformational formation. Using the Bible and depending on the Holy Spirit to achieve this transformational formation are essential. The spiritual transformation of lives occurs only through the Spirit's power. The Holy Spirit is active and essential in spiritual transformation as the teacher, guide, and empowering agent. In addition, prayer is a necessity. Bible teaching for spiritual transformation begins with teachers who pray and depend on the ministry of the Holy Spirit.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Role of the Teacher**

The goal for continuing education is to bring about maturity in believers' spiritual lives, but the channel for reaching that goal passes through local church leaders. Experience in the African context shows that this is a challenging task. Governments have struggled for decades to establish schools in all the villages, because development will never come about unless people acquire knowledge. That knowledge is necessary to bring changes in the ways people live and in the manner they work to produce goods.

Stephen D. Brookfield, in *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning*, shares some insights that are helpful for adult teachers:

---

<sup>19</sup> Ronald G. Held, *Teaching That Makes a Difference* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1992).

<sup>20</sup> Bill Taylor, "Five Teaching Principles for Spiritual Transformation," Life Way Christian Resources, 2001-2009, [http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article\\_main\\_page/0,1703A%253D157057%25336M%253D200105,00.html](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0,1703A%253D157057%25336M%253D200105,00.html) (accessed September 12, 2009).

The task of the adult teacher of adults is to help them to realize that the bodies of knowledge, accepted truths, commonly held values, and customary behaviors comprising their worlds are contextual and culturally constructed. Through being prompted to analyze their own behaviors and to consider alternative ideas and values, adults can come to an awareness of the essential contingency of their worlds. Such awareness is the necessary prelude to their taking action to alter their personal and collective circumstances.<sup>21</sup>

The statement Brookfield made here may be like blocks one can use for building more on this work. In order for the teacher to help someone understand and accept a teaching, it is his task to help the learner know his own state. The first step is to help the learner know in what condition he is in by helping him to know that there is a better one. Second, the teacher may help him realize the need and the way for change. Someone can be in a bad living condition and not realize that there is better one. The teacher in the continuing education program follows this path in order to help the local church leaders to find the need for spiritual maturity and then raise the awareness of the necessity of helping the church members.

The curriculum and the teachers of an integrated program are selected in such a way to help the body of Christ grow, because the church as a culture is nothing but an organized people, and when the values of the Bible do not serve as the basis for the culture, that group falls into sin. When Jesus stated that he would build his church, he was surely not classifying it as a building but as a body, his body. This body is the only one who has its head in heaven and its body on earth. When may one say that a local church is mature or believers are

---

<sup>21</sup> Stephen D. Brookfield, *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 76.

mature? A baby barely is able to hold up his head, and the sign of maturity is naturally when the body is able to answer positively to the command given by the head, which is obedience. When the head gives commands to the body and the body's responses align with the will of the head, that may be a sign that there is maturity. Where there is no maturity, the body has difficulty following orders given to it by the head. Where the degree of faith is low, obedience is not a priority. The hope a continuing education program cultivates is to see believers developing maturity. The characteristics of the early church (Acts 2) need to be seen today: a people among whom sanctification, prayer, and love of God come first.

Rick Warren describes well what African churches are living: "It is possible for an unhealthy pastor to lead a growing church, but it takes a healthy pastor to lead a healthy church."<sup>22</sup> Warren is correct when he says that he has a problem with the idea of numerical growth being the primary focus of pastors. Growth does not necessarily equate with health, but this thought is held by many pastors. When the environment is healthy, growth is natural, because growth of the body, the mind, and the soul occurs together.

Warren states:

Health is the result of balance. Balance occurs when you have a strategy and a structure to fulfill what you believe in the five New Testament purposes for the church: worship, evangelization, fellowship, discipleship, and ministry. If you don't have a strategy and a structure that intentionally balances the purposes of the church, the church tends to overemphasize the purpose the pastor feels most passionate about.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Marshall Shelley, ed., *Growing Your Church Through Training and Motivation* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997), 123.

<sup>23</sup> Shelley, ed., *Growing Your Church Through Training and Motivation*, 125.



The final goal of the continuing education program in Burkina Faso is to balance numerical growth with spiritual maturity. This is the purpose of the effort and the goal the churches need to reach. Numerical growth in African churches can be positive, but spiritual growth must follow. Because there is no discipleship, the spiritual atmosphere in many churches is not pleasant.

Warren deepens his thought by listing four ways to maintain balance: "You have to move people into membership, build them up to maturity, train them for ministry, and send them out on their mission."<sup>24</sup> In writing this, Warren has touched the wound in the African church. African churches are experiencing fantastic growth. New churches are planted, and the kingdom of God is spreading. Daughter churches are planted, and in these positive circumstances, there are elements that are forgotten or neglected. People are sent out without maturity and good training. The harvest is great, churches are full, but changes are not evident in the lives of the believers. The lack of maturity is apparent, and in some places, people seem to see it as a part of Christian life. A visitor in a church service may not notice immediately the lack of maturity, because Africans like to manifest their joy by dancing and shouting in loud music. But that is the only thing many of them know. After the dancing and singing, some are sleepy or spend the main time of the service outside.

At times, it is financial need that presses pastors to focus only on numerical growth. When this is the case, it is no more the spiritual well-being of believers that is the reason for the existence of the church, but it is the well-being of the pastor. In some churches, everybody does as the people of Israel did in

---

<sup>24</sup> Shelley, ed., *Growing Your Church Through Training and Motivation*, 125.



the days of the judges: "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit" (Judg 17:6 NIV). For the sake of the leaders' financial needs, everything is done to keep people continuing in their usual ways. There is no discipline, because discipline will lead people to go to other churches. When a church reaches this point, something must be done for correction.

Pointing out these facts mean that there is a need for change. As long as human beings live on earth, perfection will never be their lot, but the church of Jesus Christ should never have the world's characteristics. A training program underlines these negative facts with local church leaders and not only calls them to change but also equips them for the task. "A healthy pastor is always learning"<sup>25</sup> is a powerful declaration from Warren that must be heard by many African pastors. Even if books are rare and sometime expensive, those that are available must be exploited to the maximum. Any time a pastor stops learning, the spiritual growth of the church also stops.

One fact to consider also is the high rate of illiteracy in the African church. It is a big challenge, but there is no other path to reduce inequality in the world, reach an acceptable level of comprehension, and assure a good standard of living unless education is not prioritized. An example of continuing education in Hong Kong is taken from *International Education Journal*:

In recent years, due to economic restructuring, the problems Hong Kong has been facing are the "knowledge deficit" in the workforce and a shortage of well-educated manpower. The Hong Kong Government has implemented a number of continuing education policies with an ultimate goal to encourage and help the workforce to strengthen themselves with improved knowledge and skills. These policies rely on short-term inducements such as providing

---

<sup>25</sup> Shelley, ed., *Growing Your Church Through Training and Motivation*, 127.

monetary subsidies and loans. As the recipients of inducements differ in their capacities, preferences and objectives, there exist problems of variability that depreciate the intended outcomes.<sup>26</sup>

Leaders in Hong Kong have made corrections in order to be in line with fast changes in technology. Because of their efforts, continuing education became better known to the public, and the expansion in continuing education institutions helped realize their goals. People pursued education in order to upgrade their qualifications and find better job opportunities:

Continuing education is now considered as a lifelong process for people of all ages to acquire knowledge and skills for personal interests and academic and career prospects. During the period from 1978 to 1988, continuing education was perceived not only as remedial education but also as retraining education for those people who were out of work and were unable to embark on full-time formal education. They pursued continuing education courses in order to upgrade their qualifications and for better job opportunities.<sup>27</sup>

The effort done in Burkina Faso in training is to reach what the leaders of Hong Kong have attained. The goal is to see in the near future a large involvement by leaders. The program must be considered as a lifelong education for maturity.

O'Donovan, in *Biblical Christianity in Modern Africa*, pleaded again for a biblical Christianity in Africa. The church urgently needs to take a biblical position on issues such as tribalism, poverty, injustice, sexual immorality, abortion, and corruption in the church and in the government, responsible use of money, self-sustainable development, materialism, secularism, overpopulation, the needs of

---

<sup>26</sup> King Sing Cheung, "Recent Continuing Education Policies in Hong Kong: A Focus on Short-Term Performance Through Inducements," *International Education Journal* 7.7 (2006): 992-1006, <http://iej.com.au> (accessed September 19, 2009).

<sup>27</sup> Cheung, "Recent Continuing Education Policies in Hong Kong" (accessed September 19, 2009).

youth, teaching about family life, women in the church, and other matters related to modernity and urban life in Africa. The church needs to take a prophetic role in addressing these issues and be ready to offer solutions based on the Bible.<sup>28</sup> As O'Donovan says, there are many things that are unacceptable in the church in Africa. It is not because a church claims to be a church that makes it a true church. The full power of God will never come in the midst of a mess. There must be order, and no one will come from outside and do that cleaning. Africa must see its sons and daughters raise and proclaim theology and biblical teaching to bring the church back to the right way.

The selected literature reviewed in this chapter focuses on solving the problem of nominal Christianity, which is becoming serious in the churches in Africa. The local church leader has a full responsibility for bringing believers to a point where they are Christ-like. The transformative power of continuing education is evident and proven in the writings of these authors.

In the next chapter, the program implemented to foster spirituality in church members is explained, from its beginning, with the pioneers, to what is done presently to raise and to maintain a good quality of faith in believers. It shows how the efforts of today's leaders in spiritual formation have produced fruits and how the program itself is managed.

---

<sup>28</sup> O'Donovan, *Biblical Christianity in Modern Africa*, 211.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **THE PROGRAM OF CONTINUING EDUCATION**

God's design is for believers to mature. Hebrews 6:1 says, "Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity." Christians are told to deepen their walk and to pursue God. They are to forsake the things that hinder them and run the course laid out for them. When Christian education at any level is neglected, the effects are seen easily: the church does not rise to fulfill its responsibility, and the Great Commission is forgotten. Another characteristic of neglect of Christian education is seen in the lifestyle of believers, for traits of immature character are evident. When the fear of God is no more, sin and immorality abound. The church has an enormous task to accomplish, especially when its growth becomes exponential. That is why Christian education is a crucial means by which the church can bring about positive changes in believers' lifestyles.

Mature Christians manifest consistent outward and inward evidence of their faith. Some Christians present an outward appearance of holiness yet serve as a poor Christian witness. To live a Christian life requires having the character of Christ. A transformation must occur as a result of the Holy Spirit's indwelling (Gal 5:24-25). "When we truly practice a Christian lifestyle, the inward evidence becomes obvious. God's glory and power pours out upon all those around us. Our faith in the midst of turmoil flows from a heart given to a loving Father. Every

breath carries words of compassion and affirmation to a hurting world. Those who live the Christian lifestyle live a confident life on the inside and outside.”<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, consideration will be given to the program implemented to foster spirituality in church members, from the efforts of the pioneers to what is done presently to raise and to maintain a good quality of faith in believers.

### **Education Efforts in the Church**

In *Adults as Learners*, K. Patricia Cross says that “the learning society is growing because it must. It would be difficult to think of some way to live in a society changing as rapidly as ours without constantly learning new things.”<sup>2</sup> She continues, “It is difficult to think of any social change, presently occurring or predictable, that would not require increased attention to lifelong learning.”<sup>3</sup> These statements are made in a different context, but it is applicable also in the African context. Change is occurring rapidly in African countries also, and these changes are becoming threats because it difficult to adapt to change when there are few educated people. These threats are not reasons for African leaders give up; on the contrary, they must propel leaders to make a greater effort to educate people. Because the church is immune to these threats, the ultimate goal of a continuing education program is to maintain and improve the quality of life of church leaders and their ministries.

---

<sup>1</sup> All About Following Jesus, “Spiritual Maturity, a definition,” Following Jesus, 2002-2009, <http://www.allaboutfollowingjesus.org/spiritual-maturity.htm> (accessed September 3, 2009)

<sup>2</sup> K. Patricia Cross, *Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Cross, *Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning*, 9.

The church in Africa is growing by the grace of God, and like any group of people, the church faces problems that require solutions. The rationale for a continuing education program is to solve the problem of lack of maturity among believers. It is a great blessing to see numerical growth, but it is also necessary to find ways to balance this numerical growth with spiritual maturity.

Information from Edgecombe Community College in North Carolina shows the usefulness of a continuing education program and how continuing education is accomplished in the secular education system:

Continuing Education promotes the lifelong learning process by offering a wide range of programs and services. These programs and services are designed to meet the needs and interests of adults, regardless of their educational background. Some courses and services are offered on a continuing basis while others begin as a result of specific requests by individuals or professional or civic groups.

Courses can be developed on or off campus, day or night, whenever or wherever there is an interest expressed by a sufficient number of people. Courses and services are usually designed to assist in the following areas:

- To prepare for entry into an occupation
- To upgrade or retrain employed individuals
- To provide cultural awareness
- To provide self-improvement opportunities.<sup>4</sup>

Adults need continuing education to overcome obstacles and meet new needs that arise in an ever-changing world. Christians who are poorly taught ignore the essentials of Christian life. They do not stand strong in the faith.

---

<sup>4</sup>Edge Combe, "Continuing Education," Edge Combe, 2009.  
[http://www.edgecombe.edu/continuing\\_ed/cont\\_ed.htm](http://www.edgecombe.edu/continuing_ed/cont_ed.htm) (accessed September 3, 2009).

## **Efforts of the First Missionaries in Spiritual Formation**

Knowledge comes by promoting education, and the first missionaries who came from the United States in 1921 to plant churches understood that fact from the beginning. The future of the church depends on the quality of its leaders. While learning the local language (Moore) in order to communicate the gospel to the people, these missionaries translated a few books of the Bible into the local language, and they took time to teach Africans to write and to read in their native language. The first group who were able to read and write received a few months' training in evangelism and Bible truths; that group of ten people was ordained on November 30, 1934.<sup>5</sup> In a context of total illiteracy, this emphasis on literacy was one of the keys to the success of these missionaries.

After teaching Africans how to read and write, and after translating some books of the Bible, the missionaries started a Bible school in order to consolidate their effort in educating for evangelism and spiritual maturity. This first Bible school was located at Koubri, a village located about thirty minutes from the main city, Ouagadougou. In 1944, sixty men completed their studies and became key leaders in this newborn church.<sup>6</sup>

An urgent need emerged when the missionaries and the first native pastors planted churches. These native pastors had limited training but needed to know how to help new converts to become Christ-like. The missionaries

---

<sup>5</sup>*75ème Anniversaire des Assemblées de Dieu du Burkina Faso, 1921–1996* (Ouagadougou: Imprimerie des Assemblées de Dieu, 1996), 7.

<sup>6</sup>*75ème Anniversaire*, 53.



decided to organize teaching sessions during periodic visits to the churches.<sup>7</sup>

The author of this thesis was a young child when missionaries came to the church that his uncle was leading. Before the visit of the missionary, announcements were made to all the believers and to anyone who wanted to come to receive the teaching of the white man. It was an occasion for many people to see a white man and a car for the first time.

Two positive factors to be noted in this itinerant ministry of the missionaries was the use of the local language for evangelism and teaching and their real integration into society. These were assets for the growth of the church. These periodic visits strengthened the ministry of local church leaders and the faith of believers.

With the growth of the church in the country and the limited number of missionaries, it became difficult to meet people's needs by the visits. The missionaries next organized a convention once a year, with its main emphasis on teaching for spiritual growth. "One of these conventions was held at Kaya in 1931 and it was there, Sana Compaore, the first African, received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. . . . These conventions have been a great help for the spiritual growth of believers."<sup>8</sup> These meetings were intended primarily to promote discipleship, but they also were a means for believers from many districts to become acquainted.

---

<sup>7</sup>The scarcity of written information compels the use of information received from the testimony of pioneers. Most of the information here comes from the Reverend Dabila Delma, the uncle of the author. He came to Christ in 1934 while an American missionary evangelized his area. The Rev. Dabila was among the second group of pastors who graduated from the first Bible school in 1945.

<sup>8</sup>*75ème Anniversaire*, 14.



The writer of this work, who since 1994 has been the national director of the Sunday school program, heard from the Reverend Daniel Compaore, the former president of the Assemblies of God (AG) and the director of the AG printing press, how the Sunday school began. He said that at one meeting, after talking about the numerical growth, the missionaries decided to write short Bible teaching lessons and produce booklets for the use of the churches as was done in the churches in England and the United States. These booklets were printed with machines the missionaries brought from the United States. On Sunday mornings, before the church service started, believers were divided in small groups for teaching classes for at least one hour. The booklets were distributed free of charge at the beginning, but later they were sold inexpensively to the believers.

Today, the Sunday school program still works well and is appreciated in the churches. Now, computers are used to accomplish many tasks. When this writer was appointed as director, eight thousand copies of lessons were printed every semester in two different languages: French and Moore. Today, thirty thousand copies are printed in four different languages: French, Moore, Dioula, and Gulmancema. Almost all the churches use these lessons every Sunday to impart teaching. The feedback from local leaders has been positive, and the number of copies printed every semester is still rising.

The Reverend Daniel Compaore said that missionary Harold Jones came to the district of Koudougou in 1938 with a new paradigm for missions. The poor living condition of the population touched him, and he decided to launch, aside

from his ministry of evangelism and discipleship, a holistic ministry that shared the gospel and promoted activities with available resources. He found habits in the culture that called out for change; in addition, some methods that people used to farm or to breed livestock hindered development.

Jones's vision of sharing the gospel and alleviating misery has been a great help to the people. The promotion of social development and the truth of the Bible shared together pushed people to farm in new ways or to improve their living conditions. This missionary often provided capital when some people could not afford projects. After one decade, the result was convincing. This district had more churches and more believers living in better conditions; a comparison with the believers of other districts showed a distinct difference. This new paradigm has been positive not only for the first generation but also for the second generation. What they have inherited makes a difference between them and the believers in other districts. This new vision for missions not only has brought positive changes in the living conditions of the people but also has fostered rapid growth and a strong church.

Because the living standard was improving, the life span also expanded and the rate of success at school increased. In the area where this writer grew up, there was a great difference between his parents and his father's older and younger brothers. His parents look younger than their siblings and have accumulated more goods in life than have nonbelievers. It has been noticed that Christian children have a better rate of success in school. Along with the Good News, Christianity has brought good things and new products to Africa. Many

people in the villages still state that the first pastor who came to their village brought new vegetables and new, productive trees.<sup>9</sup> The church has been and still is an agent of development in many places in the world.

Christianity has brought positive changes in Africa. Many other examples like the one cited above show that the church has been the main agent of development in Africa. At the beginning, missionaries instituted adult education, and its effects have been positive. There is a difference between Christians and non-Christians. Christians have better living conditions and lifestyles.

### **Efforts of Today's Leaders for Spiritual Formation**

The vision of today's leaders is to reinforce the work already implemented by the pioneers and to consolidate the programs for spiritual maturity. Continuing education equips local church leaders with tools and knowledge in their context. Those who receive training have gained something that can help them improve their ministry. Their position helps them transfer what they have learned to the believers in their churches. This program is welcomed because these adults have no other means to get more education. Books are rare and expensive, relative to the leaders' incomes. In such a context, a continuing education program meets the needs of the time.

In 1984, American missionaries estimated that the church was strong enough to take care of itself, so they began to withdraw from the country. In

---

<sup>9</sup>People in many villages of the district of Sapone still give names of the people who brought new products in their villages. Pastor Paul Nikiema at Targho introduced cabbage and many other vegetables into this village. Along with his hard work in producing vegetables to earn his living, he has trained many young men who have enhanced their careers and standing in life. The living conditions have been improved in this village, and the church has grown well.

response, the African leaders appointed a team of seven people to coordinate the education program.<sup>10</sup> They started well, but few years later their effort flagged. In 1994, the author of this thesis felt the desire to launch the program again. The first session was held that same year in the Bible school where the author was a full-time teacher. All participants expressed their desire to see this effort perpetuated, and consequently, teaching sessions have been held every year. This experience brought pastors back to the Bible, where education for maturity starts. Since then, the author of this work has worked to coordinate this education program at the national level. He is now the national coordinator of this program; its seminars are well known in the country, and the number of participants increases continually. The sessions were held in a Bible School but today, in order to take the knowledge to the people, the sessions are held not only in Bible schools but also in districts and in local churches.

The church of Burkina Faso has experienced rapid numerical growth in the past few decades. From 25,000 believers in 1971, the church grew to 400,000 members in 1996.<sup>11</sup> In 2009, the office of the general secretary of the church estimated membership to be 1,000,000 believers. There are 3,860 churches with 4,300 pastors. Even in the writer's district, Ouagadougou, 560 pastors work in 465 churches.<sup>12</sup> In view of this growth, the need for recurrent training became evident. Before this program was set up, goals and objectives were envisioned, and this section deals with these points.

---

<sup>10</sup> *75ème Anniversaire*, 14.

<sup>11</sup> Archives of the Assemblies of God of Burkina Faso, at the Assemblies of God headquarters in Ouagadougou.

<sup>12</sup> Ouagadougou Assemblies of God, reports of the general secretary, 2009.

While the numerical growth of the church increased, the necessity of having a ministry that fulfills the word of Jesus, “[Teach] them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matt 28:20a), became urgent. The ministry of discipleship was needed, but how could it be effective in all the churches of the country? Only a handful of teachers were available, and the means of transportation were also limited. In order for this ministry to be effective, the leaders of the church decided to launch a program of continuing education that gathers groups of local church leaders in one place for teaching for a limited time. The goal is to enhance spiritual maturity in believers’ lives by equipping the local church leaders with tools for discipleship. The multiplication of disciples is conquering the world for the Lord by evangelization, but making disciples in the image of Christ is the task of a teaching ministry. These two ministries must overlap for the well-being of the church.

The continuing education program was birthed to meet needs. The numerical growth of the church is evident, but signs of spiritual immaturity are also evident. Therefore, the first objective of the continuing education program is to equip local church leaders with tools so that they may be effective in ministry and lead their church members to spiritual maturity. The program focuses on local church leaders because they are in key leadership positions and may bring about change among believers.

The goals of the continuing education program were designed to confront obvious problems in the churches because sin has infiltrated the lives of believers today. Church services are full and animated, with loud singing and

dancing, but what happens after all of that? The testimony Christians have in the neighborhood or in the marketplaces is not encouraging. Sometime it is hard to differentiate a believer from a nonbeliever after the church service.

One of the needs of believers is sanctification, which is the key to being in God's will. Sanctification is the process of becoming holy in daily life; it is practicing purity and being set apart from the world and from sin. As Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 (NIV), "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God." Where there is no sanctification, the work of the flesh flourishes, as Paul says in Galatians 5:19-21 (NIV):

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

One reason for this lack of sanctification is the limited training that local church leaders have. What this writer has observed in many church services calls for more training for pastors: for example, preaching in which there is no head and no tail. At times it seems that people come only for the worship time, because after the singing, almost half of the people are sleepy. There is no interest in listening to the preaching, and the result is lack of change in people's lives. That is a reason why the continuing education program must increase its efforts in equipping local church leaders. In the area of preaching there is hope,

because those who attend the training make a difference; this will bring change so that the church may be the true church Jesus intended to have.

Another reason for effective continuing education is the need of leadership development. The number of pastors is increasing, and the gap between the leadership aptitude of the pioneers and today's pastors is visible. Among many voices that are raised on this problem is that of Waston Omulokoli, who underlines that need of leaders in the church:

There is a crisis of leadership in the church in Africa today. At the root of this crisis is the vacuum which exists because the church needs larger numbers of leaders of high caliber than are presently available within its fold. . . . In the initial years of the establishment of Christianity in Africa, the African clergyman and the allied catechists and evangelists were among the most highly respected men in their communities. His spiritual role, personal integrity and pronounced academic attainment gave him an elevated social status which made him an opinion maker in the larger society.

It is now abundantly clear that although the churches in Africa started on a strong and promising foundation in the sphere of leadership, there has been deterioration in this respect with the passage of time. This is because of the process of stagnation which set after the first generation of distinguished and outstanding Christian leaders.<sup>13</sup>

The crisis underlined by Omolokoli is a real problem. It seems that many local church leaders in Burkina Faso are not born again. They are subject to sin and weaknesses that soil the honor of the ministers and their ministry. In the past, anybody could trust a pastor, but this no longer the case. A pastor should be a good example who shows others the way in life. He gains respect not for his loud preaching but for how he lives what he preaches. The teaching that pastors

---

<sup>13</sup>Watson Omulokoli, "Leadership Training for Churches in Africa," *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* 11.1 (1992), 13.



receive at the training sessions will help them made corrections in many aspects of their lives; this education is the soap that washes the dirty clothes on the pastors.

Further, the continuing education program for pastors updates and extends their skills, thus increasing their effectiveness in ministry. Training has improved the way many pastors manage their churches and their own ministry. For example, in one pastor's mind, only long services are good, but after taking training sessions, he concluded that a short but a well-prepared service produces spiritual fruits more effectively than does a long one.

In addition, the continuing education program raises pastors' productivity and improves their flexibility and motivation. It introduces them to new methods, processes, services, and even technologies. Those who have attended these training sessions attest to how the training has improved their preaching and teaching. Many people in Africa lack everything because of ignorance. They used to focus only on one thing—mostly, what their parents and grandparents did. But changes in the climate mean that every year there is less and less rain, and the farmers never grow enough crops for their food and their needs. In one session, teachers in the continuing education program called for change of paradigm. There is a possibility to begin from nothing and, slowly, in few years, be able to change one's living conditions.

For example, the growth of population in the cities creates a market, and there is a possibility to stop producing only what people used to produce and instead try to satisfy the needs of urban dwellers for peppers, onions, chicken,



and other foods. At that session, people were taught how to begin from nothing and change positively their living conditions. For less than 20 cents, someone can buy pepper seeds and grow a crop during the rainy season. If it is well maintained, this crop may provide capital to begin another new, profitable project. After hearing that, a pastor decided to make a ten-year plan. He and his wife were poor and hardly getting something to eat. He decided to go from poverty and from begging and to live well. Despite hostile condition in his context, today he is living well and even owns a car.

Another good thing to note is that training equips local leaders to solve the problems they meet in ministry, and it changes their habits. Many attested after receiving the teaching that they did not know specific ideas or practices until they came to the teaching sessions. Then, they made decisions to do things differently. The continuing education program develops new skills because it arouses the desire to explore new things. It opens the mind and motivates the spirit to do things in a better way.

Finally, continuing education is meant to help local church leaders grow their minds, hearts, and skill for ministry. Continuing education improves the ability to prepare them for service. It gives them higher status in the ministry. It gives ministers a break from the routines in ministry. After training, they are better informed and understand believers' problems. They further their own spiritual well-being, and they are better pastors, spouses, and citizens.

One of the activities of the Africa Evangelicals Association (AEA) is to organize, from time to time and in different countries, meetings and training

sessions in which good teaching is imparted. One session was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in 2002, and the theme was "Jesus, the only hope for Africa." Many speakers developed the theme, but one speaker drew an application that helped the participants to apprehend fully the effects of Africa's problems. The example he gave was that "if one day an authority decides to transfer all the population of one country in West Africa, like Ghana, to Germany, and transfer all the inhabitants of Germany to Ghana, what would happen?" The answer, that Germany would collapse and Ghana would develop, enlightened his listeners. The lesson learned was that development does not depend on the place that people leave; it depends on the people themselves. How they manage in life depends on their level of education and their ability to order their lives.

One objective of these training sessions is to help local leaders to come together to learn. Spending a few days together studying the Word of God and exchanging views on different topics helps them when they return to their congregations. The seminars provide ample opportunity to transmit facts, skills, and values and an occasion for networking and fellowship. Conversations at breaks and after the sessions are catalysts for positive changes of mind and thought.

John Stott said that "weakness is the arena in which God can effectively manifest his power," but one should not confuse serving God in humility and living in weakness. Sin has great impact where weakness is accepted as a fact.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> John Stott, *Calling Christian Leaders: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel, and Ministry* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2002), 43.

This is not to say that developed countries are spiritually strong, but where knowledge is, development is also there. Why not help spirituality and intellectual knowledge to cohabit? In some places, preachers and teachers are overwhelmed by the flow of information, but in other places, there is no Bible commentary or background information to help them understand better in order to explain to others.

### **Focus on Local Church Leaders**

Training local church leaders is a means of solving the problem of a lack of spiritual maturity in the church. The church in Africa is growing by the grace of God, and like any group of people, the church faces problems that require solutions. It is a great blessing to see numerical growth, but it is also necessary to find ways to balance this numerical growth with spiritual maturity. Local leaders are the channel for providing that balance, and the goal of the training program is to equip them for that task.

There is a difference between the Christians of 1970 and those of 2009. They all believe in God and salvation in Jesus Christ, but today's believers demand more good preaching and teaching and more attention. In the 1970s, this writer was young in the church; compared with today, believers then claimed less, and this was because of their low level of education and their cultural boundaries. People were not free to express themselves; for example, even in a meeting, the right to talk was according to one's age. But this is not the case today. Because the pace of change is fast, it is crucial that local church leaders gain new skills, new understandings, and new knowledge throughout their lives.

This is essential for producing believers who mature. To fulfill believers' demands, local church leaders must continually invest in educational knowledge and self-improvement activities.

With this continuing education, pastors can more effectively lead people to spiritual maturity. Training that equips local pastors with tools and knowledge in their context and in their native language is needed. They are surely in good position to transfer what they have learned to the believers. The future of the church depends on the quality of its leaders.

### **The Structure of the Continuing Education Program**

The church of Burkina is directed by an executive board of seven members, and this board is assisted by the twenty-six presidents of the districts and the heads of the departments in charge of different ministries (e.g., women's ministries, Bible schools, men's ministries, evangelism, missions). The continuing education department is led by a director who is surrounded by a committee of five people. The committee is mandated to do what can be done in order to reach the goal of this department, which is to develop spiritual maturity in the churches by equipping local church leaders. Its responsibility is to survey the needs and provide relevant resources and teaching material. In addition, the committee develops discipleship consciousness among district leaders and local leaders.

In order to be a member of this board, there are qualifications to fulfill. At least ten years of experience in pastoral and teaching ministry is needed, as is good theological training. The members must be good teachers with an interest

in training others, for people are eager to learn from one whose life is consistent with his teaching.

The committee meets once a year to decide on the subjects or the courses to be taught and the places to hold the meetings. These decisions are made in view of the needs in each district. When a decision is made, the director plans sessions in order to train the trainers. Like the decentralized seminars, which mobilize more than twenty teachers at one time, these sessions are essential for the teachers to understand what the subject is, what objective must be reached, and the production and translation of the teaching booklet.

The vision of the continuing education program committee is to cover all the districts with sound teaching. This is necessary because faulty teaching is spreading across Africa. In addition to the health-and-wealth teaching, some faulty teachers say that if someone is sick, it because he has sinned. If a Christian is poor, it is because he has inherited a curse from his parents or from his ancestors. That means that a Christian should not be sick or poor. When writing to the Corinthians, Paul the apostle stated that "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Cor 5:17 NIV), but in faulty teaching, the blood of Christ has no power to cleanse from inherited curses. In that context, everything is done in such a way to rob even the little money or possessions that believers possess. That is why the continuing education program must work hard to sow the truth before faulty teaching invades the churches.

Continuing education sometimes takes the form of seminars, workshops, and conferences for which everyone knows the places and the dates.

Transportation is scarce and expensive, which is why many types of training are offered in different places and at different times of the year.

For each conference, course notes are supplied in the form of booklets that are readable and affordable. All the local church leaders are allowed to participate. The teachers are trained to use teaching strategies suitable to the level of understanding of the pastors. In order to communicate well, native languages are used. Sometimes translation is offered if the teacher is from a country other than Burkina Faso.

In the past, missionaries organized conventions for all believers, and these meetings were opportunities to impart teaching for spiritual maturity. After the seventy-fifth anniversary, the number of participants became too unwieldy for the leaders to coordinate well. Therefore, at the end of the national convention, a decision was made to hold district conferences instead. Leaders encouraged the districts to continue these conventions, which have the same goal: pursuing spiritual maturity.

To replace the national convention that gathered thousands of believers, the continuing education department now organizes an annual national conference only for local church leaders who have a vocation of developing a teaching ministry. These conferences are held in May at the main conference centre of Ouagadougou. Biblical and theological themes are developed, as well as teaching principles. The number of participants is always limited in order to

have a group that is manageable; even so, 530 local church pastors participated in May 2009.

Another way to structure continuing education is through decentralized conferences around the country. Decentralized conferences are one of the main parts of the continuing education program. October is the busiest period of the year for the training team. Seven sessions, each with the same topic, are held during the same week in the districts. To prepare these seminars, twenty-one teachers meet from August to October, and their task is to set a time frame and write a handbook to be used. The handbook is translated from French into the main tribal languages of the country. This helps the majority of the participants to gain much on the subject. The handbook is printed in booklet form and sold to participants for a low price. Each team of three teachers imparts the same subject in the districts. A sample program for decentralized seminars can be found in Appendix A.

Further, Women in Ministry conferences are held once a year in the main city at the church's conference centre. The program is oriented toward ministries that women can perform in local churches. Traditionally, women have little freedom in African culture, so they encounter obstacles when they try to develop their talents, although women do exercise ministries in the local churches. Even though few women are teachers at the Bible school, this is a real advancement in comparison to what is done in neighboring countries. The conferences are appreciated, and the number of participants increases every year. There were

670 participants in October 2009. For a sample program of a Women in Ministry conference, see Appendix C.

In addition, during the year, other conferences are organized in the districts. At times, there are one-week sessions to train trainers in order to enlarge the number of trainers in the districts. Bible schools that are closed for vacation are the best locations for these sessions, which often attract 260 to 300 people.

Finally, other seminars are organized in the districts according to a specific need in an area, and the topics in these sessions vary. There are biblical topics, including the study of the books of the Bible, and theological topics. Practical theology touches on counseling, preaching, professional topics, and personal and family life. The topics are chosen to help local church leaders to better understand the purpose of the church and the key functions of the healthy church. At times, the focus is on children's ministry. A sample program for School of Evangelisation seminars can be found in Appendix D.

There are also consolidating sessions for local church leaders who have already received three years of training in Bible schools. However, Bible school programs cannot cover all subjects, so the continuing training program supplements that training and consolidates the material taught in the schools.

### **Teachings of the Program**

Generally, all local church leaders have three years of training in Bible school, and that background is an asset to recognize. The teaching imparted in



the training sessions is for some leaders a reminder of earlier training; for others, it is renewing, and sometimes the teaching updates their knowledge. Many participants appreciate the sessions because it is necessary for their success in ministry.

The themes developed usually focus on problems that local leaders talk about. This continuing education program is a noncredit program with short, intensive sessions. In these seminars, teachers touch on biblical and theological themes, practical theology, ministry management, family life, personal and work management, and so on. (For a history of the program, see Appendix E). Following are the courses that are offered in continuing education program. This list is not exhaustive, because new themes and courses are added when there is a need.

### Books of the Bible and Bible Doctrines

The books of the Bible are taught regularly in order to remind leaders of the basics of the faith and its practices. The biblical studies help the pastors to know what the Bible is. God has communicated with creation. He has revealed himself to humankind. This session examines the Bible as true revelation. For example, the study of the book of Romans is a deep verse-by-verse study. In this expository study, principles of law, grace, redemption, justification, righteousness, and other themes are covered.

Course Description: In this course, an in-depth study of truths of the Bible arranged in systematic form will be offered. The participants will be exposed to doctrine and be acquainted with it in order to teach it in their churches.

Course Objective:

1. Participants will be able to understand what message God wanted to give to humankind by giving this book and understand the methods and style used by of the writers of the Bible in transmitting God's message.
2. Participants will develop skill so that this systematic way of study may be used in their context in ministry.
3. Emphasis will be on the need to develop knowledge and to apply the Word of God to one's life. Participants will know the difference between knowing and applying of the Word of God.

### The Life of Christ

Course Description: This course is an examination of the life, principles, and events while Jesus was ministering on earth. The participants will be encouraged to reflect on his teachings and life and use that to make a possible application to their experiences.

Course Objective:

1. The purpose of this course is to provide a clear understanding of the life of Jesus.
2. Lessons will be drawn from Jesus' life to help believers develop a style of life that please God.

3. Special emphasis will be placed on a study of Jesus' love and ministry of compassion.
4. Participants will be encouraged to read carefully and study the Gospels.

### Salvation and Its Impact on Life

**Course Description:** This course will equip local leaders with faith and knowledge in order to correct wrong interpretation of the Bible and negative thoughts on the salvation in Christ. Africa lacks of many things, even the basics: food and health, but no place to develop accurate teaching about salvation. Some teachers try to say that the salvation taught in the West is different from the one taught in Africa. Some even say that salvation in Africa is wobbly. In this course, the participants will know that salvation in Christ is perfect and whole for all humans.

**Course Objective:** The general objective of this course is to introduce participants to the goal God has by giving salvation to humans. Specific objectives are that participants will:

1. have acquired a good understanding of salvation in Christ.
2. know that this salvation concerns not only the spirit but also the body and the soul.
3. understand the importance of obedience after receiving Jesus in one's life. Salvation without obedience is not useful.

## The Love of God and the Context of Poverty

Course Description: This course gives a study about the love of God for the world, especially for Africa and the causes that keep Africa in poverty.

Sociocultural strongholds are pointed out to increase understanding. In a context of hopelessness, self-development issues are no more seen, but Africa is so blessed because the blessings of salvation in Christ have brought a way out for development. What is needed is the openness of spiritual eyes to see trails of development in the African system.

Course Objective: At the end of this session:

1. Participants will be acquainted with some of the many hindrances that block one's development.
2. Participants will be challenged to create strategies by the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit.
3. The study will show the potential at hand and introduce each participant to success by obeying the principles of normal growth, which demand a small beginning.

## Pentecostal Truths

Course Description: Pentecostal Truths is a through-the-Scriptures study about the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is at work in God's world to convict people of sin and to draw them to God. Participants will become acquainted with how the Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and enables

believers to understand this truth and become transformed people. This course shows how active the Holy Spirit is in spiritual transformation.

Course Objectives:

1. Participants will be introduced to a multifaceted overview of the biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit.
2. Participants will find the necessity to rely on the Holy Spirit, who has empowered the mighty acts of those who served God over many generations.
3. Participants will learn more about the Holy Spirit and will be challenged to enrich their own spirituality.

### Gifts of the Holy Spirit and Their Management

Course Description: In this study, differentiation will be made between the gifts of God (Rom 12), the gift of Christ (Eph 4) and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12). This course describes the main doctrine of the spiritual gifts and its operation in the church. The gifts will be studied individually in order to know their role and place in the church. Vinson Synan's *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, which is a reliable historical account of the explosive growth of the Pentecostal and charismatic movement around the world, is a useful handbook in this study.

Course Objective:

1. This study shows why people believe that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit are being given to the church and why their operation continues even today.

2. Participants will know the usefulness of the gifts and be well equipped to explain how the gifts operate.
3. Participants will be able to answer to the many questions raised about these miraculous gifts and their operation.
4. The study of the historical account will enable participants to have a broad view of the manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
5. This course gives sound advice for using spiritual gifts in the church.

### Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Course Description: This course studies what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is and the experience of people in the Bible who received this baptism. Because its roots go deep in the Bible, the filling of the Spirit is an experience needed not only by the local church leader but also by all believers. This course also studies accounts of anointed people in the Bible and reliable accounts from the ministry of the church. The power and presence of the Holy Spirit is the leader's equipment for effective service and fullness in life.

#### Course Objectives:

1. At the end of this session, local church leaders will understand the necessity and the benefit of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the ministry.
2. Participants will find what and how others have done to get this baptism in order to follow their path.

A sample of the study on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit can be found in Appendix I.

### African Traditional Religions and Islam

Course Description and Objective: This course aims to provide a comprehensive study of African traditional religions and Islam. The pastors will be engaged in a process of theological reflection after examining the origin, history, and theologies of these religions. The goal is to provide a basis for pastors who work in the midst of Muslim or African traditional religion believers.

### Biblical Theology in African Context

Course Description and Objective: Biblical Theology in African Context exalts the teachings of the Bible and shows the facets of African culture that do not fit with biblical teachings. In this study, theological foundations of the Bible from an African viewpoint will be considered. This course examines both the Old and the New Testaments. The course also considers contemporary issues of biblical theology and universalism, as well as the emerging theologies of indigenous churches in diverse cultures in Africa. The goal is to equip local church leaders with information and to help them face these issues, which arise often in their ministry.

### Basic Principles of Leadership

Course Description: Basic Principles of Leadership gives an overview of the ministry of a spiritual leader so that local leaders might have a general

understanding of their role and ministry. This course shows the relationship between leadership and effectiveness in ministry. It explains what the Bible teaches about leadership by studying the leadership styles of some biblical persons. The focus is placed on leaders as models of Jesus Christ (1 Pet 5:1-4). Basic principles of scriptural leadership and how to apply those principles to church work and to specific ministries are taught.

**Course Objective:**

1. This course equips local church leaders with leadership techniques for the accomplishment of their task.
2. This basic training helps leaders to understand the purpose of the church and what kind of leadership is needed.
3. The course gives also foundational insights on how pastors should exercise leadership in local churches.

**Leadership Success by Excellence in Ministry**

**Course Description and Objective:** In this course, local church leaders will learn the process by which true spiritual and leadership style takes place. The study of various Bible characters examines both positive and negative examples of traits that lead to success or downfall in leadership. This course focuses also on the necessity of excellence in the ministry of the local church leader. It deals with how to serve God according to his will and reach a higher level of excellence in ministry. In a context of low educational levels, things often are done in a way that seeks only quantity, not quality. The purpose of this course is to help the



local church leader to reject such a mentality and to pursue excellence not only in ministry but in life also. Because God is a God of order, his servants must also seek excellence in everything they do.

### The Authority of the Church Leader

Course Description and Objective: This teaching allows local church leaders to access the knowledge and revelation concerning their position of authority in Christ. They need to know their privileges and how to overthrow powers of darkness in their ministry. Local church leaders must be reminded that spiritual warfare never ends. The devil will still attack anyone who dares to serve God with all his heart. For victory in ministry, pastors must know scriptural keys and how to apply them over the strategies of the devil.

### Developing a Good Relationship with God

Course Description and Objective: In this course, participants are motivated to give priority to their relationship with God, which points up the importance of prayer in the local church leader's life. Local church leaders will understand that God initiates a relationship with them, and that they also must take practical steps to improve that relationship with God through the reading of the Word of God and through prayer.

## Christian Life

**Course Description:** Christian Life helps participants to determine the use of everything in life, such as time, talents, and treasure. People's true priorities are revealed in their use of time and resources. A church leader must seek God as the first priority in life and use well anything God gives.

### Course Objective:

1. To help local church leaders find the necessity of managing well everything God gives for life.
2. To help change habits of spending too much time on gossip or unnecessary visits and travels.
3. To not live like those who do not know God and who spend much time on unnecessary things such as drinking alcohol in village markets. The course is designed to help leaders to use well every bit of time: working early in the morning before the heat of noon instead of starting late and working only few hours a day.

## Pastoral Care and Counseling

**Course Description and Objective:** Biblical Counseling is a study of the biblical principles of counseling and pastoral work. The pastor will know the pastoral dimensions of counseling and be ready to face problems such as sickness, conflict management, depression, alcohol addiction, faith struggles, and loss of a loved one. They will study styles and methods of pastoral care and counseling.

## Homiletics

**Course Description:** At this session, techniques for sermon preparation and preaching are reinforced for the pastors. This course teaches how the local church leader must construct and deliver a meaningful message. The art of preaching, what to avoid while delivering a message, and basic communication skills are addressed.

**Course Objective:** Upon completion of this course, the following objectives will be accomplished:

1. Participants will be introduced to eight techniques of sermon preparation according to the homiletics handbook published by African Theological Training Service.
2. Participants will be challenged to introduce these new ways of sermon preparation and to change their sermon delivery methods as needed. The final goal is have good preacher in the churches.

### Preaching for Transformation and on Contemporary Problems

**Course Description and Objective:** In this course, the teacher examines the nature and importance of preaching as it relates to the transformation of the lives of the leaders. The course encourages preachers to touch specific points in their sermons on problems that preoccupy the people in their environment and propose solutions or show how to avoid or escape those problems. During these sessions, Africa's social problems (e.g., health, bad social practices, hindrances to development) will be addressed.

## Teaching Principles

**Course Description:** This course explores the biblical and theological foundations of the ministry of Christian formation. It examines the principles and theories of education with emphasis on the interplay between the teaching, the learner, and the learning process. For Sunday school promotion in the local churches, Teaching Principles is an important course.

**Course Objective:** At the end of this session, the local church leaders will:

1. Be encouraged to develop teaching ministries in their local churches.

This teaching session helps those who have not mastered the art of teaching people to develop their abilities.

2. Understand the necessity for a teaching ministry in the local church.
3. Understand the need to organize well and develop Sunday school classes in his church.

## Disciple Making

**Course Description and Objective:** In Disciple Making, the teacher helps participants to remember the biblical call and the challenge to make disciples. It is one thing to bring people to Christ, but it is another to help them to be like Christ. Discipleship is essential to bringing believers to maturity, so leaders learn the biblical call and challenge to make disciples, characteristics of the disciple, and biblical models of discipleship. To reach the goal of spiritual maturity, disciple making must be a priority of the local church.

## Evangelism

**Course Description and Objective:** Evangelism is a theme that is taught regularly just to remind pastors of evangelization techniques recall for them the necessity of persevering in witnessing, soul winning, church planting, and development of hospital and prison ministries. The major aim of this course is to guide local church leaders to help the believers to be soul winners.

### The Necessity for Children's Ministry in Local Churches

**Course Description:** This course is a plea for a vision for children's ministry in the local churches. Children have been neglected for a long time. The churches need to understand their role in regard to the needs of children. The role and the benefit of children's ministry within the local church are taught.

**Course Objective:** At the end of the teaching session, the following objectives will be accomplished:

1. The vision for educating children in the knowledge of God must be caught by local church leaders.
2. Each pastor will know the program developed by the Children's Ministry at the headquarters of the church.
3. To launch a ministry and to support it with follow-up and finances.

## Christian Ethics

**Course Description and Objective:** The Christian ethics course is Biblical Answers to Vital Questions. The local church leaders study the character of God

and seek answers to important questions of concern to modern believers.

Leaders examine Christian ethical viewpoints, develop a biblically based ethical model, and apply biblical principles to their ministry and daily life.

### Lay Training in the Local Church

Course Description and Objective: Lay Training in the Local Church encourages local church leaders to develop local leadership. In places where state laws suppress the preaching of the gospel, trained laypeople are important. In such training, the emphasis is on relevant and challenging teaching that equips laypeople. The training insists that pastors should give laypeople opportunities to practice what they have learned.

### The Practice of Pastoral Ministry

Course Description and Objective: This course is a study of fundamental skills needed for ministry. It includes planning, administration, communication, conflict management, and decision making. This course reminds the pastors what they have already been taught about leadership in Bible school but for a fruitful ministry, there are challenges to consider. A sample course on Challenges to face can be found in Appendix H,

### Biblical Prayer and How to Pray Successfully

Course Description and Objective: Biblical Prayer and How to Pray Successfully helps local church leaders to build a foundation of prayer by

encouraging them to deepen their private prayer continually, giving guidelines for praying scripturally, and teaching the members to pray. The local church leader needs to follow the pattern of Jesus, who isolated himself from time to time for prayer, sometimes praying all night.

### Professional Topics

**Course Description and Objective:** This course shows trainees how to cope in a context of poverty, especially in the African context. Practical ways of breeding chickens, beekeeping for honey production, and current agricultural principles are activities that allow a minister to earn reasonable revenues without sacrificing time for ministry. This course gives information that equips local church leaders for ministry even in challenging circumstances.

There are pastors who could never grow enough crops to provide for the needs of their families. At one session of the continuing education program, an agricultural technician developed a course on how to cope in an area that has changed rapidly from savanna to desert. He gave a list of seeds that cannot produce anymore in this area. Many pastors understood the need to change, because they were still using seeds that are not adapted to desert areas.

### Holistic Ministry

**Course Description and Objective:** This course gives principles and information that may help local leaders in their ministry. It shows the pattern of the ministry of Jesus on earth. Salvation of the people was his concern, but

human needs were his concern too. This course is a call to focus on spiritual things without forgetting the needs of the people. Balance should be kept between prosperity and poverty gospel preaching and teaching. The church must draw people out of their ignorance and poverty and improve their lives. The church needs to address spiritual well-being, as well as the practical and physical needs of people in the church and even non-believers.

### The Leader's Family Life

Course Description and Objective: Family life topics study Christian marriage and family relationships according to the biblical pattern. Parenting and related issues of family life are taught. Many local church leaders and believers face difficulties in marriage and in the education of their children. The session provides relevant Christian advices on marriage, and Christian education for stability in homes.

### The Church and Peace in Africa

Course Description and Objective: The course examines the role and challenges of the church in Africa. Africa's instability not only concerns its political and economical life but its multicultural and social structure. The gospel must be the tool that ties people and favors positive living conditions. The preaching and teaching of local leaders should address often this issue of peace in order to develop a culture and an environment of peace in this multicultural and multireligious context.



## **Teachers of the Program**

At the beginning of the program in 1994, the author of this work, along with two other teachers in the same Bible School, was involved in teaching. With growth and decentralization came the need to have more teachers. Not everybody who preaches can teach, and this was a serious problem at the beginning, because not many people have enough talents and ministry background to teach other pastors. There were pastors who were in the ministry for more than forty years, and these people were not ready to listen to anybody. In the author's context, having a diploma is not the most important factor. Pastors are not appointed in churches or in a ministry because of a diploma or their level of education. A diploma is useful, but what is considered most is the effect the person has in ministry; it is possible to have a diploma without evidence of fruitful ministry. Although evidence may be subjective, determination and engagement in ministry constitute visible signs and evidences of one's effect in ministry. Aside from these evidences are the fruits that teachers bear in life and in ministry. Taking into consideration these factors, teachers are selected according to the impact they have in ministry and the level of knowledge they have.

The teachers are selected according to the subject they master. Themes that someone masters can be easily known by the subject that person loves to develop and the effect of his teaching on people. When a course is scheduled, the teacher is informed at least two or three months before the session. That gives enough time to the teacher to prepare for the course. A sample of the program and names of the teachers can be found in Appendices A and D.

## **Course Preparation**

In order to enhance the motivation of the trainees, there are some clues teachers should not ignore. Two factors not to be neglected are the academic aspect and mastery of the subject. Lack of adequate preparation may affect negatively the trainees' desire to learn. Teachers are encouraged to use a variety of teaching methods. When using the lecture method, the teacher must allow the participants to ask questions. The teacher must consider communicating clearly, being enthusiastic, giving encouraging comments, and using helpful illustrations and explanations. When the lesson is well prepared and allows opportunities for interaction, the students benefit.

There are also points about understanding the purpose of Christian education. Christian education seeks to promote the consciousness of God and its reality in human experience and creates a sense of personal relationship with God in the student. It creates in the believer the desire to become like Christ. The development of the new creature in God makes the believer repel sin. Believers become contributors to the work of the church.

## **Teaching Methods**

Richard E. Dodge urges teachers to

choose methods that encourage personal discovery of biblical truths. The methods we choose when leading people in Bible study should encourage that "A-ha!" moment, that experience when a learner discovers personally what the Bible says or how the passage applies to life. Methods are tools by which teachers stimulate learning. Learning is a personal process, one determined

in part by the attitude of the learner. If the learner is not interested, getting the message across can be difficult.<sup>15</sup>

Teachers encourage life changes because of biblical truth, and to touch even the most remote areas, this ongoing training meets in different locations. Generally, the methods of teaching are lectures, discussions, case studies. Reading and writing assignments are not given.

### **The Length of the Training**

In each of these courses, the length of sessions varies, and there is no specific format. Some sessions may take a weekend, while others may span more than a week. (For a sample program of a three-day training session, see Appendix G.) People are urged to make appropriate travel plans so they can begin on the first day of training. There is flexibility in time, places, and content. The effectiveness of the program requires that it provides training for people at the points of their greatest needs. That is why care is taken to provide opportunities that are suitable for a local church leader in context. The main free time of the year is the dry season, when people are free from field labor. Christmas and other periods where there are feasts are not the best times to hold a training session. Because the themes are developed according to the real need of the local church leaders, this continuing education program is a noncredit

---

<sup>15</sup>Dodge, Richard E. "Seven Tips for Teaching Improvement," Life Way Christian Resources, 2001-2009, [http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article\\_main\\_page/0,1703,A%253D157057%2526%253D200105,00.html](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0,1703,A%253D157057%2526%253D200105,00.html). (accessed September 5, 2009).

program. Sessions are usually short and intensive. See Appendix E for examples of many years of implementation.

### **Evaluation of the Teachers**

One of the most important resources for sustaining professional development in teaching is feedback from the learners. Evaluation is not done systematically after each session, but from time to time it is done by the board of administration in order to find what effect the training has on the trainees. What is usually evaluated is the understanding of the people and the applicability to life of what is received. Feedback is solicited on the content, the material used, the structure of the course, and how the teacher has presented the course and arguments. A sample of the evaluation sheet can be found in Appendix F.

### **Finances**

Finally, the cost of registration for training sessions is often reduced in order to encourage everyone to attend. Two dollars are asked for a day's session. For a one-week session, the cost is ten dollars. That may not be affordable for some people, but the price is reasonable. The headquarters of the national church often sends a subsidy to help to cover a part of the expenses, especially for people who cannot afford to pay. In addition, people sometimes make gifts to support the ministry, but these gifts are usually small and infrequent.

## **Conclusion**

By the grace of God, continuing education is helping most local church leaders to consider principles that may bring positive changes not only in their own lives but also in the lives of believers. The dichotomy between faith and practice in the daily lives of many believers is fading. This program is surely a tool that helps to reproduce the life of Christ in the lives of the believers.

The next chapter will be an evaluation of the program. In this section, the focus will be to see how effective the program is and to assess the result of the training in the churches and in the personal lives of local leaders. Feedback already received from local church leaders or solicited from leaders will be interpreted. The results of the evaluation will supply useful information for improvements in the continuing training program that will meet the real needs of the churches and reach the goal of nurturing a healthy church that balances growth with spiritual maturity.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **EVALUATION, OUTCOMES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The church in Burkina Faso is growing at a phenomenal rate, but it may be a victim of that growth. Growth without maturity ruins a church. The limited training that is available for local leaders affects the maturity of the church, but an opportunity for further education for leaders could address this issue. Training for local church leaders is needed in fast-growing churches and in a changing world. Social and cultural pressures, poverty, a low level of education, and a fast-growing church mean that the limited training that pastors have no longer fits with the new realities they face. A continuing education program provides pastors with ways to help believers improve their standard of living, resist pressure from other religions, and deal with the strongholds in their lives.

The need for balance between the rapid growth of the church and spiritual maturity is real, and this thesis shows how a model of training for local church leaders in Burkina Faso can balance numerical growth with spiritual maturity.

The focus on local church leaders is because their ministries place them in key leadership positions and their responsibilities give no excuse for mediocrity. With continuing education, pastors can effectively lead believers to maturity. They are surely in good position to transfer what they have learned to believers, and the future of the church depends on the quality of its leaders.

The rationale for a training program is to solve the problem of a lack of maturity. Growth is a blessing from the Lord, but it is necessary to balance

growth with spiritual maturity. Local leaders are the channel that may provide that balance.

The continuing education program raises pastors' productivity and improves their flexibility and motivation. It has been a means to introduce them to new methods, processes, services, and even technologies. There are many testimonies that attest that the training has improved pastors' ministry in their churches. The training also has furthered their own spiritual well-being: they are better pastors, spouses, and citizens.

### **Evaluation**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the program factors that have a significant effect on local church leaders. Writing about evaluation and long-range planning, Harold J. Westing in *Christian Education: Foundations for the Future* says, "Evaluation is a biblical mandate, a standard is essential to accurate evaluation, and evaluation can aid in life enrichment."<sup>1</sup> In developing countries like Burkina Faso, where education is not given to anybody, education can determine the local leader's and the believers' achievement not only in the spiritual domain but also in the social. The quality of the local church leader is crucial to believers' faith and social life. Therefore, pastors' ministry satisfaction is often regarded as a significant determinant on the church's spiritual life outcomes, such as the call to serve.

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert E. Clark, Lin Johnson, and Allyn K. Sloat, *Christian Education: Foundations for the Future* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 455.

Indeed, satisfaction with the continuing education program has consistently shown a significant relationship between pastors' ministry effectiveness and spiritual maturity. For this reason, this research attempts to identify various factors influencing the pastors' ministry development and believers' faith building.

The continuing education program was initiated to serve as a resource for clergy and the church. Pastors have been consulted in order to know what they want, and the effect of the course depends on themes or problems within a district. If there is a recurrent problem in a district and if the teaching is well done, the participants are strongly affected and equipped for positive changes.

The goals for the training sessions include increasing effectiveness in ministry; spiritual formation; discipleship; nurturing leaders; development of new skills; and general growth with the main focus on maturity.

### Research Backgrounds

Evaluation of the continuing education program was done in four different districts. Some districts were chosen because of pastors' eagerness to be trained, along with their interest in knowing more and their willingness to apply what they have learned. Another district was chosen because of local leaders' reluctance for any advancement in life. There were no evidences of spiritual growth, significant spiritual changes, and positive social achievement. It has been also noticed during this study that some pastors were known for their laziness



before they received education, but positive changes were evident after they attend the training sessions.

Interviews have been done with district leaders, regular participants in the training sessions, local church leaders involved in continuing education programs, and believers in local churches where the pastor attended the training sessions.

### Research Method

Evaluation is the process of getting answers to the question, How are we doing?<sup>2</sup> Evaluation is a measurement of success or failure and the degree of success or failure in achieving educational objectives.<sup>3</sup> Westing says that "another strong reason for evaluating is to check the results of our ministry."<sup>4</sup>

In order to gather relevant information, visits were made to many villages where pastors minister. A choice had to be made between survey papers or visual contacts, and it was necessary to take into consideration some information from the context. Community environments and family background of the people have a great impact on people's reactions. For this reason, visual contact was chosen as the more effective method for this project.

In addition, the low level of education in the villages does not permit a paper survey. With the younger generation it might be a possibility, but most of the people do not accept or understand what will be done with a paper questionnaire. Also, the concept of a paper survey is not yet well known. It is

---

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth O. Gangel, *Building Leaders for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 189.

<sup>3</sup> Gangel, *Building Leaders for Church Education*, 189.

<sup>4</sup> Clark, Johnson, and Sloat, *Christian Education*, 456.

among the “never seen” (a very new thing), and there is a fear of a paper in some places. When it comes to work in remote areas, people are reluctant to share a bit of their life with someone, because they do not know who is who, but spoken information is less permanent than written information.

Further, the ill use that people suffered during the colonial period was dreadful for many tribes. When the governors sent someone with a paper, it was usually to get more taxes or to give an order to arrest someone in the village. Because of the low level of knowledge, people fear that what they say will be used against them later. In some places, preparations were made in order to assure people that the information collected would be well protected, but fear is still strong in some people.

This research also focused on the effect that training has had on what may be called positive changes. The intent is to show how training has formed local leaders' views of ministry satisfaction. The contributions to this work came from four different selected districts. Some considerations dictated the selection of these districts. Two districts were chosen because of the assiduity of the pastors to the training sessions. That made easy the evaluation of the effect of the training sessions. Another district was targeted because of visible evidences of positive changes that occurred from the beginning of the training sessions to today. Local pastors' personal achievements and local churches' new realizations inform the work. Some of the information is based on observations, surveys, and interviews.

The visual contact survey brought the researcher to forty-two local church leaders. These pastors were interviewed to see what the training from the continuing education program has done in their lives, their family living, and their ministry.

Although the survey was visual, with oral questions, the questionnaire had many detailed questions. The following list is a summary, and the questions were conceived according to the level of understanding of the people.

1. Did the continuing education programs respond to the needs of the local church leaders?
2. Do continuing education programs provide resources that help local church leaders fruitfully engage with the most challenging issues in the church?
3. What pushes a local church leader to seek further education?
4. How should the continuing education program improve and meet better the need of local church leaders?
5. Are there other means to equip pastors in order to boost spiritual maturity?

### **Findings**

As stated above, the community environments and family background of the people has a great effect on their reaction. During these interviews, the researcher found that 92 percent of participants expressed satisfaction with the

courses and the instructors. The teachers were enthusiastic and committed to teaching, even if there was a little difference of mentality between pastors, who came from the bush, and teachers, who live in cities. This result has been possible because of how the teachers have been selected according to their background. The researcher also has identified that there is a big gap between the churches where the leaders are open to further education and those who are not.

Before analyzing the cause of the difference between churches' performance, it is important to give some detailed information about the conditions of the communities surrounding the churches. People in the villages used to live in mud houses without electricity and running water. The monthly income is usually less than twenty dollars. Many places are dry, with few opportunities to initiate some kind of production, but in valleys, it is possible for people to grow vegetables and thus increase their income. In some places, there are meadows only during the rainy season, and that may help make enough reserves for the dry season. There are places where the population cannot be blamed, but in others, the poor living condition of the people is due principally to their ignorance. It is usually in these contexts that the rate of birth is high and parents cannot afford to send their children to school.

However, the response of participants after they have taken a course shows that continuing education has positive effects. Pastors who attended one or two training sessions made changes in methodology and in the content of their teaching, and believers have noticed these changes. Pastors themselves said

that they had forgotten principles they had received from their classes at Bible schools. According to a group of pastors from two districts, continuing education sessions are surely the best way to get them in one place for a few days to renew their knowledge. One pastor said that church attendance was dropping, but attendance has increased because people are happy to receive good teaching.

In another district, it has been noticed that the social and spiritual life of churches has improved. There were many crises because of lack of good leadership. However, as soon as the training session addressed the needs of local leaders, people loved the church again. That good atmosphere has been positive not only for spiritual growth but also for numerical growth.

In one area, peace and harmony among the local leaders was no more known. This negative situation was not good for a long-standing ministry in that district, and that weakness opened occasions for many to fall into sin. There was no synergy of action. Everyone was ministering indecently and independently, and believers were influenced by what they saw in their leaders. The training that the pastors received has eradicated this disharmony. As a result, the pastors have found that the success of each one depends on the work of the others. The church is now able to respond to the real needs of the people. Such a healing was needed, and that new atmosphere of dependability and cooperation in the local leaders created a positive environment for spiritual growth.

In another instance, a local pastor shared the testimony of a nonbeliever about his church. The pastor said, "I am in the village, and the church is here for

many years now, but [the nonbeliever] has observed the church and its members for quite a while. He has noticed that something new happens among the people. There were no differences between them, but for few years now, believers' living conditions have been positively changed. They are succeeding in whatever they do, and even their small bush market is now led by Christians. Now it is Christians who can lend money or goods to others. But it is not only the changes in their living conditions, but they are honest and peaceful. There are fewer quarrels between Christian husbands and their wives. Any time people sue someone in the village because he has robbed or did wrong, it is not a Christian but a non-Christian." This non-Christian observed the positive changes in the members of that church, and he became a member. For him, there is hope in this group. The pastor said that these positive changes are due to the renewal he gets every year at the training sessions of the continuing education program. The training he continues to receive brings out good things and takes all his members to maturity.

Growth in Africa churches is evident, but Islam is still invading Africa. It is now a subject of prayer in order to see good and strong ministries emerge among believers. Even if growth is visible, it is not as strong as the growth in Islam. That means that the church can do better in evangelism and social care if ministries are developed. This other religious group is now well-organized everywhere, and they meet the basic needs of African poor people. If believers develop real Christian living with evangelism through social work, Africa will not be invaded by Islam.

Recently, the wife of this researcher was asked to teach girls in a church where the district leaders had gathered them for three days. There were problems of sin among them, and the leaders found it necessary to do something for them. The teacher was surprised, on her arrival, to see that more than three hundred young girls were gathered. While teaching, she mentioned the necessity of a true conversion, but she did not take time to explain deeply. When the time for questions arrived, the girls raised this point because they wanted more explanation. Some girls did not understand; they were born into Christian families, and this put them in a position of holiness. The teacher was dumbfounded to see girls in the age group of eighteen to twenty-five who still were still at this level of understanding Christianity. That means that there are weaknesses in the ministry of the local church. Basic knowledge is not taught, and that puts the church and all the future in danger.

In the midst of such efforts in training for positive changes, there still are pastors who have no interest in the training opportunity set before them, but the testimonies spread from the churches they manage are negative. Pride or a sense of having enough knowledge may be what hinders them. However, these churches stagnate in spiritual life and in the social well-being of the members. In these churches, attendance is dropping.

#### Other Findings

In one district, two local church leaders left the Assemblies of God group because of conflict and relationship issues. Another one left ministry due to

spiritual starvation; he does not nourish well his soul. The training sessions are opportunities to correct deviations among the leaders, and it gives tools to the local leaders to cooperate and find harmony even if the spiritual atmosphere seems to be negative. Many pastors had no training around these issues.

It has been also proven that the ongoing support and learning from the continuing training program in groups was important to the success of the program. When pastors learned something, they could go home and try it, then come back and debrief. The support that the training provided has helped the learners to think deeply in order to find meaningful solutions for the problems they meet in ministry. Among the findings is the fact that sharing is easier in a group where people know each other well and share the same language and culture. There are fewer concerns with the learning sessions because money is not perceived as an obstacle.

The continuing education program has become an educational institution that creates priorities for ongoing continuing education. The leaders encourage clergy to see the value of the training and to make efforts to participate.

The conditions of church management made a difference. When the style is adapted to the context, satisfaction is evident, and peace and joy are signs of good health of the church. Those who still lack interest in training are far behind, struggling for a living when others have moved forward.

Another distinctive maturity factor affecting pastors' ministry is the welfare of the pastors. Salary or revenue was the most important incentive for pastors' morale. If a pastor cannot feed well his family and cannot afford to send his



children to school, what a terrible condition he is in. These pastors usually complain about their ministry status. Churches in Burkina Faso are poor, but they must support their pastor; however, each local leader is encouraged to be a "tentmaker" by working to provide for the needs of his family.

Within context, when pastors in villages were asked, "What do you need first for ministering better?" the pastors answered differently. Some need more material resources, and others need support, including an increase in salary. Others want to be better trained and to have the opportunity to receive that training. In brief, whereas the majority of the pastors see salary as the most important factor in their satisfaction in ministry, others view opportunities for ministry development as the most crucial factor, along with salary. In circumstances where pastor and people cope with poor living conditions, it is understandable and even right for the pastor to regard remuneration as one of the key factors affecting ministry satisfaction. It is to note that only 14 percent of the denomination's pastors are well financially.

It has also been noticed that when a church goal is oriented only toward self-growth, the members no more pay attention to quality in leadership, Christian lifestyle, and spiritual maturity. Ministry is not a profession for a lifelong career as it is conceived by many other people.

#### Other Effects of the Training Program

The problem most of the pastors were facing was the challenge of helping believers to become Christ-like people. This need is now in the process of being

met through the sessions set out by the continuing education program. The vision of the continuing education program in the beginning was to impart knowledge and give tools to local church leaders to enable them to be effective in ministry. This goal already has been implemented for more than ten years in different places and at different levels.

There are signs that indicate the relevancy of this training program and its effect. One sign is the enthusiasm people still have for these sessions. In many places, it is necessary to limit the number of participants because of problems with lodging or facilities. The program is well known today, and the period of training is popular.

Other positive signs are the reports that district leaders give at the quarterly national leadership meetings. The leaders of the church have divided the country into twenty-six districts. Each district has an administrative board. These district leaders meet every three month to coordinate all the activities in the country. The reports of the district leaders are the official voice that gives credit to the program. Many times it is said that it meets the core needs of local church leaders. The outcome emphasized by the leaders proves the relevancy of the program.

Feedback from pastors is also a positive indicator. District meetings and other meetings are occasions for local leaders to share with other what the Lord has done for them or in their ministry. In the culture of this country, people do not express quickly their feelings. A real man does not express his feelings often

because of cultural bias. But in this case, leaders share what they have gained and express their thankfulness.

Beyond the positive comments in reports, other evidences are also significant.

Churches that have many problems have recovered. Pastors who forgot the principles for good ministry are now doing better. Training that teaches people how to realize a farming project or how to manage in life has been useful for many. One pastor did not have even the minimum for his family but is now moving out of misery. Another one was exploiting the land he had. He came to a training session in which the program touches on points of development. When he returned home, he began to plant mango trees. Today, these trees are producing well, and that product gave him better living conditions; he even bought a second-hand car recently.

Those who first come to these training sessions never want to stay home at the time of the next one. The training has been a way to open many local pastors' eyes and minds to how they can improve their ministry and their own living conditions. Ignorance is a real threat that keeps millions of people in poverty's bondage.

These outcomes underline the relevance of the program. Training in context and in local languages reinforces the impact and strengthens the learning and the application. The result is to have a healthy and mature church.

Until now, the program and the method of teaching have been evaluated by feedback from the participants. The new generation of pastors is not hindered

by the culture, which discourages free expression, but some people are still strongly bound by that cultural expectation. Even if they do not express publicly what they think, they do so privately, and there are means in the context to express one's thoughts without offending others.

### Weaknesses of the Program

After more than a decade of implementation, it is wise also to recognize some weaknesses of the program. The church can do better in touching the world and edifying believers if most workers receive good training and if their involvement in ministry is strong. Lack of knowledge and a weak sense of consecration among ministry workers are main reasons for the spiritual weaknesses and the slow spiritual growth of parishioners. The main hindrance is not lack of finances; God is using men and women to do great things. It is interesting to consider how effective the pioneers in the church were. The apostle Paul planted churches and taught in many places, and his financial autonomy intrigues all Bible students. This tentmaker was free to go anywhere the Spirit guided him. The first goal Jesus had on earth was to make disciples so they in turn could spread the good news all over the world and make disciples.

Training in context that uses local languages reinforces the effect and strengthens the process of learning and application. It is wise to keep in mind that the result is to have a healthy and mature church. The church needs to go a step further and provide spiritual nurture. It is time to let leaders know the spiritual reasons why God asks them to assure the spiritual growth of the church.

After more than a decade, the training committee still wonders why all the local pastors have not yet caught the vision. Some pastors are still far behind, not moving with the group. An African expression says, "Termites eat the piece of wood that never moves." Mark Rouch expresses it in other words: "Lifelong learning is that quality of life characterized by openness to oneself, to others, and to the world, which let learning occur anytime, anywhere, using whatever data may be available and appropriate"<sup>5</sup> All church leaders must move together in order to confront the problem of immaturity and antichristian values.

As movement in life demands, the training committee is still heading for improvements in the process of adaptation. More decentralization is needed, especially in the context of poverty, but the size of Burkina Faso constrains decentralization. A large number of local pastors cannot afford to travel to the main cities for training.

The lack of well-educated trainers will soon be a problem. Something needs to be done at every level. Each district needs to catch the vision and consecrate funds to train trainers in high schools. Good allocation of human resources will assure a future for the efforts of continuing training.

It is clear that the continuing education program has contributed to bringing about change in the churches. This improvement in the quality of faith and the social life of the people is an asset, especially in an undeveloped African country.

---

<sup>5</sup> Shirley D. McCune and Mark Rouch, *Continuing Education for Ministers: A Pilot Evaluation of Three Programs* (Washington, DC: n.p., 1968), 84.

Spiritual growth is a goal pursued by training, and true training does that, as well as improves human living conditions. The objectives are to equip leaders with biblical and theological knowledge and to empower them with new methods adapted to the new context. The training equips them with knowledge in their context and in their native language, so that the principles of the training are easy to practice. This way of training develops a high standard of leadership and helps leaders to understand what their call and duties are according to 1 Peter 5:1-4.

The program is designed to meet the needs of all pastors, even the ones serving in remote areas. Until now, efforts have been made to provide continuing education, but that is financially challenging for some districts. Resources are scarce in some areas and contributions from participants are small, and even the small amount asked hinders some pastors from participating in training. Everything is done in such a way as to encourage anyone to come to the training sessions, but more ways must be found to assure that the departments in the districts has sufficient resources.

### Focus on Pastors

Why does training focus mainly on pastors? In the training sessions, teachers say that someone cannot give or share what he does not have. A giver always gives what he has. The people in the churches expect everything from their pastors, but if he has little to offer, who else will nurture them? With effective training, these pastors are the people best able to bring about changes in believers' lives. It is known that development does not depend on where a

person is leaving but how the person manages to develop the place he is in order to gain better living conditions.

The challenge that local pastors face is how to make their parishioners true Christians. The time has come for Africa's church leaders to catch the vision not only for training but also for training for results. If today's leaders do not persevere in the process, the next generation will accuse them of being the church's gravediggers. Positive changes, spiritual growth, and life improvement are goals for true training, and the final objectives are to equip local pastors with biblical and theological basic knowledge and to empower them with new methods. Unless changes occur in the spiritual life of believers, churches will not be the true beloved church Jesus intended to have.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

Since the program has been implemented, evidence in many districts and churches shows that the training has had results in the churches:

1. People live according to what the Bible teaches them.
2. There is synergy of action. Love binds the children of God, and harmony brings good health and development.
3. Salvation in Christ for people who have been in the darkness since the beginning of the world is the only door.
4. In the midst of sicknesses and diseases, spiritual maturity encourages good behavior, honesty, work well done, and a sense of responsibility.

The continuing training has contributed to shaping the life of people and their opinion, and these results encourage the board of the continuing education program to find that the intended end is reach to the glory of God.

### What Makes the Difference?

What is a mature Christian? What would characterize such a person? In Rwanda, more than 70 percent of the population was at least nominally Christian, but that is where the worst genocide took place—and that is what most people think of when they define a Christian. It means that it was “Peter fighting against John”; not people with tribal names who were killing each other but people with Christian names. Where there is growth without spiritual maturity, things may take a worse dimension than what is done in the pagan world.

During the visual interviews, many pastors were asked to describe behaviors that indicate Christian maturity. What are the signs that show that church members are truly believers? What indicators say they are on the path of maturity? The answers were based on long observation in the churches and of many Christians' lives. The following points were emphasized by many pastors.

1. Obedience to the Word of God is the main sign. This may be seen gradually, but results of obedience should be clear.
2. True believers hate sin. This is not the case today in many churches. People may know the Word of God but not live it.



3. Mature Christians manage better their time, their goods, their money, and their life. In the villages, the difference is net. Believers look younger than those who are drunk and doing other things.
4. There is a difference in lifespan and welfare.
5. Mature Christians benefit from God's grace, and it has been noticed that they have fewer medical expanses.
6. It has been remarked that that Christians take more initiative in developing agriculture and new means that improve their living conditions.

These points about mature Christians are not exhaustive, but they are evident when one asks how to become a mature Christian and how long it takes.

It will take at least as long as it will take for you to realize that this question is unanswerable. A mature Christian is one who exercises godly wisdom and does not become disillusioned by the things that people do, but, rather, stays focused on Christ. A mature Christian is one who realizes the vast amounts that he does not yet know. Many people develop spiritual pride and think they know more than the average Christ-follower. These people are not mature! This old saying is very true in Christianity: The more you know, the more you know you don't know! A Christian who realizes the truth about his or her own knowledge, who seeks the counsel of the Holy Spirit before jumping into action, and who consults the Bible for truths about Christianity, is most likely a mature Christian.<sup>6</sup>

Tricia Tillin also observed that a mature Christian is ruled by God's will and nature. He puts his own needs to one side and is willing to go without for the sake of God and for others. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (Gal 5:24).<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Rapture Ready, "How Do I Become a Mature Christian and How Long Does It Take?" Rapture Ready, 2009, <http://raptureready.com/faq/faq24.html> (accessed November 10, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> Tricia Tillin, "Be Perfect, part 2b, How Mature Am I?" Into Truth, 2009, <http://www.intotrueth.org/dev/perfect2b.html> (accessed November 10, 2009).

## Comparing the Findings with the Word of God

What does it really mean to be a Christian?

Being a Christian means that you are changed on the inside, not controlled from the outside. It means that your heart has been changed by the presence of God. It does not mean that you are required to go to church, required to pay tithes, required to be good, required to do anything in order to stay a Christian. It means you desire to do those things because you've been changed. So, being a Christian means that you have encountered the true and living God and that you have undergone a change in your heart and soul. It means that you are not restricted to the Laws of right and wrong in order to please God because you cannot please God by what you do. God will only find pleasure in you through Jesus Christ. To be a Christian means to follow Christ, to desire Him, to fellowship with Him, to be indwelt by Him, and to bring glory to Him in your life.<sup>8</sup>

Christians are challenged by the scriptural truths to live according to God's Word in this present world. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:19 (NIV), "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?" The presence of the Holy Spirit makes alive this mortal body and helps a person hate sin. That is why Paul says, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20 NIV). Watchman Nee is right when he says, "Christ presently become the source of life to us. He lives in us today as He once lived in the flesh."<sup>9</sup> A Christian should grow in the knowledge of God and live for God. Oswald J. Smith shows ways to live for God: The Christian needs to be sure of his salvation, take a public stand for Christ, turn from all he knows to be wrong, spend time with God in Bible study and prayer, and do God's work by giving out

---

<sup>8</sup> Matt Slick, "What Does It Mean to Be a Christian?" Carm, 1995-2010, <http://www.carm.org/christian> (accessed November 10, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> Watchman Nee, *The Spiritual Man*, vol. 3 (New York: Christian Fellowship Publishers, 1968), 196.

gospel tracts, singing in the choir, attending the prayer meeting, becoming a witness, visiting the sick, or doing similar deeds.<sup>10</sup>

“Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God” (Heb 6:1 NIV). “God’s revealed purpose is to produce disciples who will reflect the perfect humanity of his Son in both personal life and Christian service. . . . The maturity he has in view is not confined to the spiritual life, for it must be lived out in the context of the body.”<sup>11</sup>

Maturity is a process, and Paul gives his own example in Philippians 3:13-14: “Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus” (NIV). James (1:2-5) said it in other words: “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him” (NIV).

Second Corinthians 5:17 calls believers to put on the new man:

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (NIV).

Paul almost repeats this in Colossians 3:10-15:

---

<sup>10</sup> Oswald J. Smith, *The Man God Uses* (Nairobi: Njogu Gitene Publications, 2000), 86-88.

<sup>11</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Discipleship* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 75.

Put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. . . . Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful" (NIV).

Kenneth Boa touches on five areas of stewardship that are part of becoming mature and that must surely end in a holistic spirituality. For Boa, "Holistic spirituality distinguishes our primary calling to know and love God from our secondary calling to express this relationship in everything we do and in everything we encounter."<sup>12</sup> Christians are called to reproduce for the ministry and the glory of Jesus. Real change will always take the person closer to God. Spiritual maturity is not a matter of age or a matter of appearance. There are people who may look and sound spiritually mature, but do they really know how to walk with God? In some places there are people who may look holy, but so often that is just appearance, not reality. In other churches, people equate spiritual maturity with achievement, but this is not what the Bible teaches. Good Christians cultivate right habits. The strongholds must be shaken and overcome. The freedom Christians have in Christ must be evident.

It is necessary for each Christian to know where he is spiritually. The Bible teaches the necessity to be conformed to the image of Christ. That is the beginning of Christian maturity.

---

<sup>12</sup> Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 243.

The results of this evaluation may supply useful information for improvements in the continuing training program. The final goal is to meet the real needs of the churches and bring believers to spiritual maturity, which must match with the numerical growth. Based on the results reported in this chapter, the next chapter gives suggestions and recommendations for further development of the program. Even if some results in ministry have already been achieved in this decade, the greatness of the task that is still undone suggests many changes for the future of the training program. These suggestions will show the path for a better continuing training program in order to attain its objectives.

### **Training Outcomes**

The goal set at the beginning of the continuing education program is to develop spiritual maturity in believers' lives by equipping local church leaders with tools for discipleship. The team in charge of the continuing education program has the responsibility to direct the seminars in such a way that pastors receive maximum benefit. From the perspective of cognitive input and from field experiences, seminars should be occasions to reflect upon what is learned and to evaluate learning. Participants can then apply principles and concepts to problem solving.

The main outcome envisioned at the beginning is to raise the spirituality of the believers and bring the church to the path of spiritual maturity. The values of this program have been evident at the beginning. The program should provide visible evidence of maturity. Positive change should be seen: avoidance of sin

and a good style of life. The program should have been a means of stabilizing the spiritual life of the churches.

Pastors who do not know how to cope with ministry and life should be given ways to solve their problems. The continuing education program should raise pastors' productivity. The management of the churches must positively change, and the believers should feel better. The training must improve flexibility and the motivation of local leaders. The training given to the pastors should increase their effectiveness in ministry; spiritual formation; discipleship; development of new skills, and general growth. When leaders and participants see the value of the training and make efforts to participate, this will be a good indicator of the program's effectiveness.

The program should help bring peace and growth. Churches that have problems should see healing. Pastors who have forgotten the principles for effective ministry should do better.

The program should change of the living conditions of the participants. The training should open many local pastors' eyes and minds to how they can improve their ministry and their own living conditions. The program should decrease ignorance, which keeps millions of people in the bondage of poverty.

## General Obstacles to Continuing Education

After implementing the training program for a decade, the team in charge of the program still wonders why everybody has not caught the vision. There is a great openness to further training, but there are pastors are not moving with the group. Nothing in this world is static, and lack of movement is not an option. A main concern today is the quality of the faith in the churches; because of that, the move forward must be in the same direction in order to confront the problem of antichristian values.

Adults face many obstacles for continuing their educational goals and needs. Common obstacles to the continuing education program are a lack of good teachers or the unavailability of good teachers. There is a need for guidance on how to recruit, train, and work more effectively with teachers. As the ministry grows, there is an increasing demand for qualified teachers.

Another general obstacle is how to cope effectively with changes that occur in life today. The difference between generations is clear, and it is sometimes hard to devise something practical for everyone. But the committee must be willing to set forth new models of leadership that are based on the real need of the people.

In comparison with English-speaking countries, literature in French-speaking countries is not abundant. This situation worsens when one attempts to provide a continuing education program in tribal languages. Literature is not available, and that urgent need must be met for a generation that has not been able to attend French schools.

Though the training programs have been offered for more than a decade, this writer found among many of the participants a great openness to further training or studies, but people struggle with meeting the needs of their families and furthering their own knowledge. At one point, for example, this writer was in a master's degree program, his wife was in the bachelor's degree program, and some of the children were in university or secondary schools. Many other church leaders are in similar situations and have difficulty to meet their needs and the needs of the family.

### **Recommendations**

Finally, it is possible to make some recommendations for further development of the continuing education program for churches in Burkina Faso. Even if some results have already been realized in this decade, the greatness of the task that remains holds possibilities for changes to the training program. The author of this work offers twelve recommendations, and these recommendations will show paths for a better continuing training program that attains its objectives. Because the continuing education program introduces the local church leaders to new methods, processes, services, and even technologies, it raises pastors' productivity and improves their flexibility and motivation. Those who have attended these training sessions attest to how the training has improved their preaching and teaching in their churches. Because the pace of change is so fast, it is crucial that local church leaders gain new skills, new understandings, and new knowledge throughout their lives.



In January 2008, a suggestion was made to think about what and how the training program is implemented. New needs have been noticed.

The first, most important recommendation is to adapt the program to new realities. More and more educated people are now coming into ministry. The number is growing slowly, and it is time to consider this new fact. The first wave of pastors was illiterate, and the first missionaries spent time helping them learn to read and write in their tribal language. Efforts have been made to write booklets in native languages, or to translate them into those languages.

The French, who colonized the country, started schools. One French missionary came and started a primary school and a secondary school. This Christian school, created in 1957, has produced and still produces educated people not only for the church but also for the nation. In the past, difficult living conditions pushed every educated person to find a job as a civil servant, because civil servants received a good salary. It was easy to find a good job with a better salary somewhere other than in ministry. Only a handful of graduates desired to enter into ministry. Today, that situation has changed. This new wave of people coming into ministry is now filling a gap. Educated people in the districts who attend the churches need educated local church leaders. The continuing education program needs to raise the level of the program; new graduates have the capability to use books, so books in French are now needed. In a short time, training in French will be also recommended.

The size of the country is a factor that constrains decentralization, but a second recommendation is more decentralization of training centres. Many local

pastors cannot afford to come to the main cities for training sessions.

Decentralization and reproduction of training sessions will meet the need in context. In the process of decentralization, changes must be made in the mindset of the leaders. The training headquarters, which is now in the main city, soon must have subheadquarters in some districts. Training facilities in the districts will boost the effort to bring education to the people and to meet the needs in their context. As a result, districts will catch the vision and consecrate means and money for the training program.

A third recommendation speaks to the fact that there is a pressing need for more teachers who are well trained. The training team that works in the program is based in the main city. The need for well-trained teachers will arise soon in some districts, but each district needs to catch the vision and consecrate means and money to train trainers. Each district must be encouraged to support the training of teachers.

Related to the need for well-trained teachers is a need for wise allocation of human resources. There are districts with a large number of people with an acceptable education, but these people are not ready to go to the remote places.

There are teachers who still hesitate to be involved in the program, so a fourth recommendation is that teaching ministries must be encouraged. One factor is that a teaching ministry cannot feed the teacher: the support from local churches is too little. Once, this writer was invited to teach in a meeting in which more than one thousand people were gathered. After four days of teaching, the

district board gave him two chickens and less than half of the money he used to buy gasoline for his travel. He was not discouraged, because he saw positive responses, and the value of the training cannot be underestimated. However, some pastors who have a teaching ministry avoid involvement, because this ministry demands frequent travel. The recommendation, then, is that the local churches and the district leaders consider the task done by the teachers and assure more help in order to encourage them.

The number of non-educated people is still large, and therefore the need for providing resources in tribal languages is urgent. The government and many individuals are attempting to multiply the number of schools in the country. The rate of children who attend schools is not high, and the need for knowledge is ongoing. It will take more than two generations to reach a high rate in education in the country, and people understand things more easily in their native language. That fact shows that the training team must find ways to implement this fifth recommendation.

The time has come for each district to build a good training program with a good team. The rapid growth of the churches and the rising number of pastors necessitates consideration of this sixth recommendation. There are surely good teachers among the pastors in the districts, and the time has come to organize them and encourage them to create teaching sessions. For any district that still does not have qualified teachers, the committee of the continuing education program at headquarters will continue to provide a scholarship for a few

teachers, as it has done in the past. These district teaching teams will promote the continuing education and assure the spiritual well-being of the church.

Further, as a result of the training, local churches must catch the vision and develop local training programs. What has been received in the training sessions must be shared with the local church. The time has also come to push the continuing education program not only with clergy but also with churches. Everybody must be involved in order for training to be effective.

Another, eighth important recommendation is to find issues for which pastors have no training. Nothing is perfect in this world, and the committee needs to be open to suggestions. The new realities that this generation faces means the committee must expand its vision and seek ways to better respond to the new needs of this generation.

There is enormous potential for effective ministry for those who are currently engaged in pastoral work, and therefore they need to be challenged and taught. Many have had inadequate training. Seminars can help to make up for this lack, so a ninth recommendation is to develop training sessions that equip pastors with resources in order to challenge traditions and practices that are not biblical.

In the African context, redundancy and competition are usually frequent. However, competing ministries do not foster spiritual maturity. The greatness of this danger calls everyone to work together in order not to waste effort. The openness of the training team allows those who want to collaborate to become

part of the larger work. For the benefit of the church, the need to work in concert is urgent.

Further, the goal of the continuing education program is to help local church leaders grow their minds, hearts, and skills for ministry. Books are helpful, but new technology must be used to accommodate the rising level of education of the people. The use of CDs, videos, and websites will be crucial.

The final recommendation is that openness must be maintained in order to meet new challenges. Outcomes from the training sessions show some conflict in the districts and in the churches. Until now, when a pastor planted a church, he was free to stay there as long as he chose. But today, there is reaction against that practice. Staying too long in a church may affect negatively the spiritual life of that church, although staying may be a positive factor in stability and spiritual growth.

This writer expects this thesis to open eyes and push many church leaders and trainers to rise up and affect positively the church's life.

### **Conclusion**

If one considers the results of this study, this is encouragement to continue with the training program, because it is a factor in solving the problem of spiritual immaturity in the church. It is time for leaders of the church in Africa to catch the vision of training.

The training program corrects spiritual starvation in the local church leader's life and ministry because pastors used to give but never receive spiritual

food. As a result of the training, congregations can see the difference in their clergy. A local church leader who participates in the training sessions is more motivated, creative, and happy, and therefore the church members are happy.

It is known that development never depends on the place people are leaving but on how they manage better living conditions. Positive changes, spiritual growth, and life improvement are the goals for true training, and the final objectives are to equip local pastors with basic biblical and theological knowledge. Changes are possible, and challenges can be overcome. Problems that churches face have solutions. The potential to face the needs is at hand. The time has come for the leaders of the church to catch the vision to train for results. There is an urgent need to persevere. Unless changes occur in the spiritual life of believers, the churches will not be the true, beloved church that Jesus intended.

## APPENDIX A

### A SAMPLE PROGRAM FOR DECENTRALIZED SEMINARS

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (Département de la Formation Continue)

##### Decentralized Seminars

**Date:** October 13 to 16, 2008

**Theme:** Ministering: How to break intimidation and release the gifts of God  
The goal of this conference is to restore the spiritual authority of local church leaders so that they may be assured of or regain authority and serve well in their ministry. There are people who manipulate ministers, and in intimidation they hinder the release of the power that is in the pastor. Many local leaders are dominated; some have the title of leader without authority of making any decision or exercising ministry.

**Opening session:** October 13, 2008 at 19 h 30

**Closing session:** October 16, 2008 at 12 h

##### Distribution of teachers and places of meeting

**Districts of:** *Ouagadougou, Tanghin-Dassouri, Ziniaré et Kombissiri*

Pastors Diessirîma Sawadogo, Benjamin Yanogo, and Michel Koala

Meeting place: Gounghin, Ouagadougou

**Districts of:** *Bobo, Banfora, Boromo, Dédougou et Gaoua*

Pastors Jephté Sawadogo, Pierre Tassembedo, and Philippe Yameogo

Meeting place: Dédougou

**Districts of:** *Koudougou, Yako, Ténado et Léo*

Pastors Timothée Balbone, Baowendsom Ouedraogo, and Michel Oueddraogo

Meeting place: Koudougou

**Districts of:** *Kaya, Dori et Bogandé*

Pastors Elie Koumben, Job Ilboudo, and Marcel Yanogo

Meeting place: Kaya

**Districts of:** *Pô, Zabré*

Pastors Jérémie Idogo, Jules Compaore, and Aldiouma Ouedraogo

Meeting place: Pô

**Districts of:** *Ouahigouya, Djibo et Kongoussi*

Pastors Etienne Zaongo, Philémon Salam Ssaba, and Salomon

Sawadogo

Meeting place: Ouahigouya

**Districts of:** *Tenkodogo, Fada, Boulsa, Diapaga et Zorgho*

Pastors Zacharie Delma, Jean Kabore, and Rakis Zongo

Meeting place: Koupela



**APPENDIX B**  
**A SAMPLE OF REPORT OF THE TEACHERS**

**Department of Continuing Education**  
**(Département de la Formation Continue)**

**CENTER OF:**

**NAMES OF THE TEACHERS**

1.

Tel:

2.

Tel:

3.

Tel:

**REPORT ON PARTICIPATION**

District of:

Number of participants: District

of:

Number of participants:

District of:

Number of participants:

District of:

Number of participants:

**Total:**

**OBSERVATIONS**

## **APPENDIX C**

### **A SAMPLE PROGRAM FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY CONFERENCE**

#### **CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (Département de la Formation Continue)**

#### **WOMEN IN MINISTRY CONFERENCE**

**Date:** October 23 to 26, 2007

**Theme:** "Do not neglect the gift which is in you . . . let everybody see your growth" (1 Tim 4:14-15)

#### **Meeting Program**

**Tuesday, October 23, 2007**

19 h 30 – 21 h 30, Opening meeting

**Wednesday, October 24, 2007**

05 h – 06 h Morning prayer, Rev. Joël Kologo

07 h Breakfast

08 h – 10 h Teaching session: Recognizing the gifts and talents in you, Rev. Zacharie Delma

10 h – 10 h 30 Break

10 h 30 – 11 h 45 Teaching session: Do not neglect the gift which is in you, and may your progress be evident, Mrs. Julienne Porgho

11 h 45 – 12 h 20 Testimonies

15 h – 16 h 15 Teaching session: How to minister in a current context, Mrs. Mrs. Aoua Delma

16 h 15 – 17 h 30 Experience sharing time, Mrs. Cécile Ouedraogo

19 h 30 – 21 h 30 Prayer session, Rev. Jérémie Gouba

**Thursday, October 25, 2007**

05 h – 06 h Morning prayer, Rev. Joël Kologo

07 h Breakfast

08 h – 10 h Teaching session: How to use the gifts and the talents, Rev. Philippe Yameogo

10 h – 10 h 30 Break

10 h 30 – 11 h 30 Teaching session: The rise of powerful ministry among women, Mrs. Julienne Porgho

11 h 45 – 12 h 30 Teaching session: The Holy Spirit and the development of a ministry, Mrs. Aoua Delma

15 h – 16 h 15      Teaching session: Building a ministry that gives glory to God,  
Rev. Zacharie Delma  
16 h 15 – 17 h 30    Panel on how to accomplish ministry well  
19 h 30 – 21 h 30    Prayer and effectiveness in ministry, Rev. Joël Kologo

### **Workshops**

#### **Thursday, October 25, 2007**

16 h – 17 h 30

Mrs. Esther Compaore, Leader's wife: How to bring peace and joy in the family  
Mrs. Ouénemanegdé Sawadogo,      How a woman can initiate a job in order  
to cope in life  
Mrs. Belem, Management: How to initiate and succeed

#### **Friday, October 25, 2007**

15 h – 16 h 30

Mrs. Esther Compaore, How to be an effective local leader's woman  
Mrs. Belem, Management: How to initiate and succeed  
Mrs. Elisabeth Oubda, Training centers for girls: How to start and manage  
Mrs Elisabeth OUBDA      Training Centers for girls: How to start and manage it.

**APPENDIX D**  
**A SAMPLE PROGRAM OF THE SCHOOL OF EVANGELIZATION**

**CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
**(Département de la Formation Continue)**

**School of Evangelization**

**Date:** March 5 to 10, 2007

**Meeting Place:** Bethel Secondary School

**Meeting Program**

**Interpretation:** Rev. Joël Ouedraogo

**Monday, Mars 5, 2007**

15 h – 18 h Arrival

19 h Dinner

19 h 30 Orientation and first session, Rev. Zacharie Delma

**Tuesday, March 6, 2007**

7 h Breakfast

8 h – 10 h The urgency of evangelization, Rev. Zacharie Delma

10 h 30 – 12 h 15 Techniques of communication in evangelization, Rev.  
Zacharie Delma

12 h 30 Lunch

13 h 30 – 14 h 30 Intercessory prayer

15 h – 17 h Evangelization strategies, Rev. Dramane Yankine

18 h 45 Dinner

19 h 30 – 21 h 30 Effective prayer and evangelization, Mrs. Aoua Delma

**Wednesday, Marsh 7, 2007**

7 h Breakfast

8 h – 10 h Evangelization strategies (2), Rev. Dramane Yankine

10 h 30 – 12 h 15 Profile and the message of the evangelist, Rev.  
Dramane Yankine

12 h 30 Lunch

13 h 30 – 14 h 30 Intercessory prayer

15 h – 17 h Practice of evangelization, Rev. Pierre Tass

18 h 45 Dinner

19 h 30 – 21 h 30 Effective prayer for effective evangelization, Mrs. Aoua  
Delma

**Thursday, March 8, 2007**

7 h Breakfast

8 h – 9 h Evangelization for church growth or church planting, Rev.  
Marcel Yanogo

9 h – 10 h Administrative process to get permission for evangelization,  
Rev. Marcel Yanogo

10 h 30 – 11 h 30 Evangelization in difficult areas, Rev. Zacharie Delma

11 h 30 – 12 h -15 Mistakes to avoid in evangelization, Rev. Zacharie  
Delma

12 h 30 Lunch

13 h 30 – 14 h 30 Intercessory prayer

15 h – 17 h Training to reach Muslims, Rev. Salam P. Saba

18 h 45 Dinner

19 h 30 – 21 h 30 Effective prayer and evangelization, Mrs. Aoua Delma

**Friday, Marsh 9, 2007**

7 h Breakfast

8 h – 10 h Good training and effectiveness in evangelization, Rev.  
Zacharie Delma  
10 h 30 – 12 h - 15 Workshop  
12 h 30 Lunch  
13 h 30 – 14 h 30 Intercessory prayer  
15 h – 17 h Synthesis  
18 h 45 Dinner  
19 h 30 – 21 h 30 Closing session

**Saturday, March 10, 2007**

7 h 30 Breakfast and the end

## **APPENDIX E**

### **EXAMPLES OF THEMES DEVELOPED**

#### **2004**

May: National seminar about principles of homiletics

October: Decentralized seminars about expository sermons

#### **2005**

May: National seminar about how to handle church conflicts

October: Decentralized seminars about rediscovering God's presence for a successful ministry

#### **2006**

March: School of evangelization, which trains people in evangelization; participants change each year. A sample program for School of evangelization can be found in Appendix D.

March: School of the Bible, which teaches the basics of the Bible

May: National seminar about church management

October: Decentralized seminars about the place of children in the church.

October: Women in Ministry conference about the role of women in the church

#### **2007**

March: School of evangelization

March: School of the Bible

May: National seminar about baptism of the Holy Spirit and its importance today

October: Decentralized seminars about what leaders need to know about leadership pitfalls

October: Women in Ministry conference about women's ministry that fits the cultural context

## **2008**

March: School of evangelization

March: School of the Bible

May: National seminar about the place of forgiveness in the church's life and in the ministry

October: Decentralized seminars about how to break intimidation and release the gifts of God

October: Women in Ministry conference about knowing your gift for a successful ministry

## **2009**

March: School of evangelization

March: School of the Bible

May: National seminar about the love of God and the context of poverty

October: Decentralized seminars about building a healthy church today

October: Women in Ministry conference about the role of women in building a healthy church



## APPENDIX F

### A SAMPLE OF THE EVALUATION SHEET

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

#### (Département de la Formation Continue)

This paper is very useful to us. It helps the continuing education board members to hear from you and manage to satisfy you. We are grateful to hear your views about the session so we can decide if we must make further improvements in the future. Please complete this form and hand it back to us. Again, thank you for your comments.

#### *The quality of the educational provision*

|  | Very useful | Fairly useful | Okay       | Not very useful | Not at all useful |
|--|-------------|---------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| How useful did you find the class teaching?                | 1           | 2             | 3          | 4               | 5                 |
|  | Very well   | Fairly well   | Reasonably | Fairly poorly   | Very poorly       |
| To what extent were you able to interact with the teacher? | 1           | 2             | 3          | 4               | 5                 |
| To what extent did the readings in the textbook help you?  | 1           | 2             | 3          | 4               | 5                 |
|  | Very easy   | Fairly easy   | OK         | Not very easy   | Very difficult    |
| How easy did you find it to get hold of the readings?      | 1           | 2             | 3          | 4               | 5                 |

What would you say is the greatest single thing you got out of the written assignment? If you feel you got nothing from it, say why you found it so unproductive.

*The appropriateness of the style of teaching and the performance of the teacher*

|   | Very<br>useful | Fairly<br>useful | Okay            | Not<br>very<br>useful | Not at<br>all<br>useful |
|---|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| How useful did you find the group discussions?    | 1              | 2                | 3               | 4                     | 5                       |
| How would you categorize the aims of the class?   | 1<br>Very well | 2<br>Fairly well | 3<br>Reasonably | 4<br>Fairly poorly    | 5<br>Very poorly        |
| How well would you say these aims were fulfilled? | 1              | 2                | 3               | 4                     | 5                       |

Your comments

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## APPENDIX G

### A TYPICAL SCHEDULE FOR A THREE-DAY TRAINING SESSION

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (Département de la Formation Continue)

##### Monday

15:30 – 18:00  
19:30 – 22:00

Registration  
First session

##### Tuesday

5:30 – 6:00  
7:00 – 7:45  
8:00 – 9:20  
9:30 – 11:00  
11:15 – 12:30  
13 – 14:50  
15:00 – 16:10  
16:20 – 17:40  
19:00 – 22:00

Morning prayer  
Breakfast  
Session 1  
Session 2  
Session 3, Workshops  
Lunch and rest time  
Session 4  
Session 5, Workshops  
Session 6

##### Wednesday

5:30 – 6:00  
7:00 – 7:45  
8:00 – 9:20  
9:30 – 11:00  
11:15 – 12:30  
13 – 14:50  
15:00 – 16:10  
16:20 – 17:40  
19:00 – 22:00

Morning prayer  
Breakfast  
Session 1  
Session 2  
Session 3, Workshops  
Lunch and rest time  
Session 4  
Session 5, Workshops  
Session 6

##### Thursday

5:30 – 6:00  
7:00 – 7:45  
8:00 – 9:20  
9:30 – 11:00  
11:15 – 12:30  
13 – 14:50

Morning prayer  
Breakfast  
Session 1  
Session 2  
Session 3  
Lunch and departure

## APPENDIX H

### A SUMMARY OF THE TEACHING PRODUCED IN A FORM OF BOOKLET IN OCTOBER 2007

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (Département de la Formation Continue)

DECENTRALIZED SEMINARS: October 2007

Contributors to the writing of this teaching:

Pasteur Zacharie DELMA  
Pasteur Jephté SAWADOGO  
Pasteur Philémon Salam SABA  
Pasteur Rakiswendé ZONGO  
Pasteur Salomon SAWADOGO  
Pasteur Marcel YANOGO

**Thème : Un Ministère fructueux : Quelques défis à relever.**  
**Fruitful Ministry: Challenges to consider.**

#### Introduction

L'Eglise est la propriété du Seigneur Jésus Christ. Elle est le produit d'un miracle de la transformation des hommes et des femmes par le Saint-Esprit. Christ bâtit son Eglise chaque jour. Il la préserve des forces de destruction et des puissances des ténèbres. L'histoire témoigne d'ailleurs de l'engagement de Jésus aux côtés de son peuple à le défendre contre les pouvoirs tyranniques et les politiques d'éradication de la foi chrétienne, contre les ouvriers rapaces, cupides et négligents.

La gestion de l'église a été confiée à des serviteurs pendant que Christ est assis au ciel en attendant son prochain retour et en offrant particulièrement l'opportunité aux âmes égarées de retourner à la bergerie. Pour se faire, Christ a établi dans l'Eglise des ministères, « des apôtres, des prophètes, des docteurs... » 1Cor 12 : 28 afin de l'édifier et de la préparer comme une fiancée pour le jour de son mariage.

C'est donc une lourde responsabilité qui est confiée au serviteur de Dieu pour l'accomplissement de cette noble tâche. En effet, il n'est pas rare de croiser des ministres de l'évangile blasés, déçus et quelquefois devenus l'ombre d'eux-mêmes à cause du manque de motivation ou tout simplement accaparé par l'appât du gain facile. Cet état d'abandon du ministère porte dangereusement préjudice à l'œuvre de Dieu et aux fidèles qui se battent comme ils le peuvent

pour se nourrir de tout ce qu'ils rencontrent sur leur passage avec tous les risques d'indigestion et d'intoxication spirituelle.

Ainsi le thème du présent séminaire à savoir « un ministère fructueux : quelques défis à relever » trouve sa signification. Comment peut-il en être autrement quand les menaces d'une dérive laxiste s'installent de plus en plus au sein de certains ministères ? Il est temps de tirer la sonnette d'alarme, de sensibiliser les serviteurs de Dieu afin que chacun s'attache à son ministère avec zèle et désintéressement. C'est du reste la recommandation que fit Paul à Timothée en ces termes : « Je t'exhorte à ranimer le don de Dieu que tu as reçu par l'imposition de mes mains... » 2Tim 1 : 6-8. Elle est également d'actualité pour notre génération.

C'est pourquoi ce présent séminaire se veut un cadre de réflexion, d'échange et d'exhortation en vue d'encourager chaque serviteur de Dieu à mieux servir son maître sans nullement se laisser influencer par les sirènes du monde. Ainsi, des sujets tels que le service décent et harmonieux, « les 3 D » et « Tuer l'esprit de Judas dans la gestion des biens de l'Eglise » permettront aux serviteurs de Dieu de procéder à des ajustements en vue de bien paître le troupeau de Dieu.

## Sommaire

### I. Service décent et harmonieux

#### A. Comment servir décentement et dans l'ordre ?

- Connaître son environnement

- Avoir une bonne communication

- Eviter la subjectivité :

- Comprendre la culture

- Avoir une bonne formation

- Servir sans compromis

- Evitez les pièges du leadership qui conduisent aux désordres

  - Moi, uniquement que moi. « Le Pasteur trop pointilleux. »

  - Je ferme les yeux « Le Serviteur faible et trop tolérant. »

  - C'est moi qui commande ici. « Le Pasteur insensible. »

- Servir décentement c'est servir dans l'harmonie.

- D'où vient le désordre dans le ministère.

  - Le manque de patience.

  - Vouloir tout changer en un temps record.

- Quelques approches pratiques

  - Se soumettre au Maître.

  - Dépendre du Saint Esprit

  - Etre à sa place

  - Se fixer des objectifs

    - Sur le plan spirituel

- Sur le plan familial
- Sur le plan financier
- Sur le plan intellectuel
- Sur le plan Physique

Pourquoi servir décemment et dans l'ordre ?

Les problèmes socio-économiques peuvent être des obstacles

Le Pasteur doit continuellement renforcer ses connaissances

La sous-alimentation ou la malnutrition spirituelle 1P 2 : 2.

Le service dans l'ordre, une nécessité

Exemples d'un service désordonné dans la Bible

Exemples d'un service ordonné dans la Bible

## II. Distraction, Déception et Défaite dans le ministère pastoral : Les trois « D »

### A. Comment éviter la distraction dans le ministère ?

L'importance du Ministère

La distraction dans le ministère

Comment les éviter ?

### B. La déception dans le ministère : Sources et causes

La déception : notion et champ d'application

Deux Conceptions Opposées de la Victoire

Les Chemins tortueux

L'Endurcissement du Cœur

Le Complexe de Supériorité

Le complexe d'infériorité

Les dérives de l'incrédulité (Jean 15 :5)

La Stagnation Spirituelle

### C. Comment éviter la défaite dans le ministère ?

Définition

Etre un bon Soldat (Ph 2:25 ; 2Tim 2 :3).

Etre prêt au sacrifice.

Le pasteur doit veiller sur sa vie individuelle et intérieure.

Le pasteur doit veiller sur sa vie relative ou sociale

Cultiver le désintéressement.

Bien Gouverner sa famille (1Timothée 3.4, 5)

## III. La gestion des biens de l'église (Tuer l'esprit de Judas dans l'Eglise).

Introduction

### A. Finances

Les sources des finances de l'église

La gestion efficiente des finances de l'église

L'élaboration du budget de l'église

Etablir un comité de gestion des finances de l'église

- Les sources de malversations
- B. Le pasteur et la gestion des finances de l'église.
  - Comment éviter les pièges liés à l'argent ?
  - Le rôle du pasteur dans la gestion des biens de l'église
  - Les biens de l'église locale
  - Les ressources humaines
  - Les biens matériels
- C. Le rôle du pasteur dans la gestion des biens de l'église
  - La gestion des hommes
  - La gestion financière.
  - La gestion des biens immobiliers
  - La gestion du mobilier
  - Les rapports
- Conclusion

## APPENDIX I

### A SUMMARY OF TEACHING PRODUCED IN A FORM OF BOOKLET ON THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
(Département de la Formation Continue)

#### Course on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

##### A. Baptême du Saint Esprit (Baptism of the Holy Spirit)

La Bible est le livre du surnaturel et tout croyant reconnaît cette réalité. Ceux opposés au surnaturel soutiennent qu'ils doivent l'éliminer de la Bible afin de rendre l'Evangile acceptable pour l'homme moderne. En fait, le contraire n'est-il pas vrai ?

Jésus a dit: «Je ne vous laisserai pas orphelin» (Jean 14:18) et la vie de milliers de personnes a été transformée par l'Esprit de Dieu. Notre centenaire est étiqueté comme étant le siècle du Saint-Esprit. La plupart des enseignements de l'Eglise mettent particulièrement l'accent sur les ministères du Saint-Esprit. Pour permettre au croyant de rester sur la bonne voie et sur les fondements solides, une attention particulière mise sur l'enseignement de la Bible sur ce sujet est nécessaire.

##### 1. Qui est le Saint-Esprit ?

Le Saint- Esprit est la troisième personne de la trinité donc une personne divine. Il est digne de recevoir notre adoration, notre foi et notre amour. Il est un être personnel, infiniment sage et infiniment saint. Le Saint-Esprit n'est pas une puissance que nous pouvons utiliser comme pensent certaines personnes. L'histoire de l'église enseigne que plusieurs personnes ont nié la personnalité de l'Esprit. Les Monarchiens, les Ariens, les Sociniens et certains néo-orthodoxes, tous ces groupes ont semé et sèment encore une confusion que la Bible ne soutient pas.

Selon les paroles du Seigneur Jésus, les faits de la personnalité du Saint- Esprit sont réels. «Quand sera venu le consolateur. Que je vous enverrai de la part du père, l'Esprit de vérité qui provient du Père, il rendra témoignage de moi » (Jean 15:26). Lisez aussi dans Jean 16 : 7-8 et 13-14.

Les noms qui désignent le Saint-Esprit impliquent sa personnalité. Il connaît tout et est libre de sa volonté. «Il vous rappellera tout ce que je vous ai dit » a dit Jésus dans Jean 14:26. L'Esprit Saint accomplit la mission pour laquelle il a été envoyé. « Il rendra témoignage de moi » (Jean 15:26).

##### 2. L'œuvre du Saint-Esprit



Le Saint-Esprit guide les croyants. Le seigneur Jésus a dit qu'il nous conduira, c'est dire que sa présence ne sera pas passive. Il est partout à la fois (omniprésent), il est tout puissant: (omnipotent), et il connaît tout (omniscient). L'Esprit de Dieu nous aide dans notre faiblesse (Romains 8: 26) et chacun connaît sa faiblesse.

La Bible enseigne aussi que l'Esprit de Dieu intercède pour nous. Intercéder, c'est user de son influence en faveur de quelqu'un. Selon Romains 8: 14 «Ceux qui sont conduits par l'Esprit de Dieu sont fils de Dieu». Si l'Esprit Saint conduit, pourquoi ne pas se laisser guider dans la vie. La présence du Saint-Esprit dans notre vie, dans notre famille, dans nos relations et dans tout ce que nous faisons, apportera de grandes bénédictions dans tout ce que nous entreprenons. Le Saint-Esprit dirige ceux qui se soumettent à lui.

### 3. Blasphémer contre le Saint-Esprit

La Bible enseigne que l'on peut blasphémer contre le Saint-Esprit (Matthieu 12 : 24 –27). Selon ce contexte, les miracles de Jésus étaient trop nombreux pour être niés et son objectif était de faire du bien. Ceux qui ne l'aimaient pas attribuaient l'origine de ces miracles à Satan. En Luc 12:8-10, ce péché impardonnable est dû au reniement du Christ. Certaines personnes vivent actuellement dans la peur, craignant d'avoir déjà blasphémé contre le Saint-Esprit. Aussi longtemps que vous aurez toujours de la crainte de Dieu dans votre cœur, cette crainte n'est plus justifiée. Il vous suffit de mettre votre vie en règle avec Dieu et de jouir de la présence du Saint-Esprit. Blasphémer contre le Saint-Esprit, c'est tirer de fausses conclusions en attribuant l'origine des miracles, la transformation des vies en Christ et les guérisons aux démons.

### 4. L'Esprit dans la vie du croyant

L'enseignement sur le Saint-Esprit occupe une bonne place dans la Bible et nous n'avons plus besoin de le deviner ou de l'imaginer. Les bénédictions pourvues par le Saint-Esprit ne sont pas comparable aux solutions aléatoires que proposent les grands penseurs. La Pentecôte a apporté la puissance de Dieu dans l'Eglise et cette puissance permet aux chrétiens de vivre une vie victorieuse.

Le baptême du Saint-Esprit est encore nécessaire aujourd'hui surtout que nous sommes dans notre monde qui va à la dérive. L'apôtre Paul priait Dieu pour que les croyants soient puissamment fortifiés par son Esprit. Cette puissance dont il est question est le baptême du Saint-Esprit. Ce baptême permet aux croyants de recevoir le miracle de Christ. Le Saint-Esprit fortifie le croyant par sa puissance et le conduit dans une vie sainte, une vie de fils de Dieu. Il produit dans le croyant des fruits et des qualités qui sont celles de Christ. Il guide le croyant et lui donne la puissance dans la prière. Pour toute cette raison, chaque chrétien est appelé à l'inviter et lui donner la première place dans sa vie.

1. Qu'est-ce qui prouve que l'Esprit saint a une personnalité ?
2. Le Saint-Esprit vous a-t-il déjà révélé ou donné des instructions sur la conduite à tenir dans la vie ?
3. Si le blasphème du Saint-Esprit est un péché grave comment l'éviter ?
4. Que fait le Saint-Esprit dans la vie du croyant ?

## **B. Le Saint-Esprit dans l'Eglise Primitive**

L'église primitive était une église guidée par le Saint Esprit. Les premiers chrétiens ne se sont pas contentés d'une expérience formelle et passagère de l'accomplissement de la promesse du Père le jour où le Saint-Esprit vint sur eux. Ils sont allés plus loin en se laissant guider par le Saint-Esprit. En effet, l'Esprit-Saint disciplinait (Actes 5 :9), dirigeait (Actes 8 :29), désignait des personnes pour un travail précis (Actes 13 :2), prenait des décisions (Actes 15 :28), et empêchait parfois (Actes 16 :6).

### **1. Saul et Barnabas envoyés par le Saint-Esprit**

Le missionnaire Henry Martin qui travailla en Inde a dit : « L'Esprit de Christ est l'Esprit de la mission, et plus nous nous approchons de lui, plus nous devenons des missionnaires. Telle était l'expérience de Saul et de Barnabas, lorsqu'ils servaient le Seigneur à Antioche. Ils furent appelés par le Saint-Esprit pour porter l'Evangile dans le monde entier.

Le chapitre que nous venons de lire nous permet de voir que tous les chrétiens se sont donnés plus tard à l'évangélisation. Jérusalem était d'abord le nerf central de l'oeuvre. Mais à partir d'Actes 13, Antioche au Syrie devait devenir le nouveau centre de l'oeuvre missionnaire. Dieu avait suscité à Antioche d'autres personnes en plus de Barnabas et de Saul pour aider à propager l'Evangile. Les prophètes étaient de canaux utilisés par le Saint-Esprit pour édifier, exhorter, consoler et encourager l'Eglise. Les docteurs aidaient eux-aussi à enraciner les chrétiens dans la connaissance de la parole de Dieu. Luc mentionne ici cinq noms de personnes qui servaient le Seigneur dans l'Eglise : Saul, Barnabas, Siméon, appelé le Niger, probablement originaire d'Afrique, Niger signifie noir. Lucius venait de Cyrène en Afrique du Nord. Menaham qui veut dire « consolateur » avait été élevé avec Hérode le tétrarque (Hérode Antipas qui tua Jean-Baptiste). Fut-il sans doute marqué par la mort de Jean-Baptiste ?

L'assemblée d'Antioche était bien solide et tous servaient le Seigneur. Le texte dit qu'ils jeûnaient aussi. Le seigneur Jésus n'a pas beaucoup insisté sur le jeûne. Pendant qu'il était avec ses disciples, ces derniers étaient tous les jours avec lui et ils n'avaient pas besoin de jeûner (Luc 5 : 34). Toutefois de nombreux passages bibliques indiquent la nécessité du jeûne. Ici il est clair que les chefs et probablement toute l'assemblée avaient tout laissé de côté pendant un temps pour se consacrer à la prière et au jeûne.

Pendant qu'ils étaient dans la présence de Dieu, le Saint-Esprit parla et leur ordonna (à toute l'assemblée) de mettre à part Barnabas et Saul pour

l'œuvre à laquelle il les avait appelés. En grec, la forme employée est très impérative, la particule utilisée exprime un commandement, un ordre exprès. De quelle manière le Saint-Esprit s'était-il exprimé ? Le texte ne nous le dit pas. Nous pouvons supposer que c'était par le moyen du parler en langues avec interprétation ou encore par une prophétie. Mais le Saint-Esprit avait certainement déjà œuvré dans les cœurs de Barnabas et Saul à ce sujet.

Ces derniers servaient le Seigneur dans l'église. Ils avaient donc des responsabilités au sein de l'église d'Antioche.. C'est pourquoi il fallait que l'église soit d'accord pour les laisser partir. Le message du Saint-Esprit était donc adressé à toute l'assemblée et non pas seulement à ces deux personnes.

## 2. Le Saint-Esprit prenait des décisions

La conférence qui s'est tenue à Jérusalem en Actes 15 est un autre tournant très important dans l'histoire de l'Eglise. C'est à cette rencontre qu'a été réglée la question de l'intégration des païens devenus chrétiens dans l'Eglise. Les chrétiens judaïsants soutenaient que le salut n'était que pour les Juifs. Selon eux, pour que les disciples d'origine païennes (gentils) s'y intègrent, ils devaient se plier au rite de la circoncision et observer les lois juives. Les enseignants progressistes qui se rangeaient aux côtés de Paul et Barnabas affirmaient que l'Evangile concernait les Juifs et les Gentils selon le même critère de la foi en Jésus Christ sans dépendance vis à vis de la loi juive. Un sérieux conflit éclata entre ces deux parties et menaçait l'Eglise de division.

Il est intéressant de savoir que les décisions qui ont été prises à cette conférence expriment l'unité et l'amour de personnes qui débattaient sur des idées opposées. Les Juifs légalistes abandonnèrent volontairement l'exigence selon laquelle les Gentils devaient se circoncire pour être sauvés et les Gentils acceptèrent volontiers un changement dans leurs habitudes alimentaires. C'était un compromis qui n'affectait aucunement la vérité de l'Evangile.

Aujourd'hui nous pouvons encore tirer des leçons sur les résolutions de cette conférence. Les croyants ont besoin de travailler ensemble, de prendre le temps d'écouter et d'aimer les autres. Combien de rivalités blessantes et de scissions aurions-nous évitées si seulement le peuple de Dieu se donnait le temps de dialoguer en permettant au Saint-Esprit de parler et d'œuvrer en son sein.

Les problèmes de plusieurs églises ne sont pas causés par des différences doctrinales, mais plutôt par des divergences de vues sur des choses pratiques. Ce dont les chrétiens ont besoin aujourd'hui, c'est une dose d'amour décrit dans 1 Corinthiens 13 pour prévenir les divisions et les dissensions. Pendant que nous nous occupons de nos différences, ne devons-nous pas chercher à savoir comment nos décisions affecteront le témoignage et l'unité de l'église.

Dieu a ouvert une grande porte de salut aux hommes et il est de notre responsabilité de porter cet évangile à tout le monde. Il y a des forces dans l'Eglise qui veulent fermer cette porte. Mais en tant qu'enfants de Dieu,

contribuons à maintenir cette porte ouverte afin de toucher le maximum de personnes. Il est aussi important de donner au Saint-Esprit la liberté d'action, c'est là que l'Eglise de Jésus-Christ remportera de grandes victoires.

Questions :

Que faisait le Saint-Esprit dans l'Eglise primitive ?

A qui le Saint-Esprit a-t-il donné l'ordre de mettre à part Saul et Barnabas ?

Qui était à l'origine des grandes décisions dans l'église ?

### **C. Les obstacles au baptême du Saint-Esprit**

En principe tous les chrétiens devraient être baptisés du Saint-Esprit. Chacun devrait rechercher avec ardeur ce baptême qu'a promis le Seigneur parce qu'elle une expérience normale des chrétiens. Comme nous l'avons déjà vu dans les leçons précédentes, le baptême du Saint-Esprit apporte la puissance pour la vie et le service chrétien. Certaines personnes aujourd'hui nient intentionnellement le baptême du Saint-Esprit mais cette négation n'empêche pas les manifestations du Saint-Esprit la vie des chrétiens. Jésus-Christ a promis d'envoyer le consolateur ( Jean 14 :16) et dans les derniers jours, Dieu répandrait de son Esprit sur toute chair (Joël 2 :28).

#### **1. Le baptême du Saint-Esprit est pour tous les croyants**

Le baptême dont il est question ici n'est pas la nouvelle naissance. Ce baptême est distinct de la nouvelle naissance. Le Saint-Esprit réside dans la vie de tous les chrétiens qui sont nés de nouveau. La Bible enseigne que Dieu donne son Saint-Esprit à ceux qui le lui demandent ( Luc 24 : 49), et nulle part dans la Bible rien n'indique que Dieu a changé d'avis. Le baptême du Saint-Esprit est accordé à ceux qui demandent à Dieu. La Bible dit que si nous lui demandons du pain, il ne nous donnera pas ce qui est mauvais. Si le baptême est un sujet de gloire pour Dieu et une promesse à tous les croyants tout le monde n'est pourtant pas qualifié à être enfants de Dieu . Plusieurs personnes portent des noms chrétiens mais ils savent eux-mêmes qu'ils ne sont pas chrétiens. Etre chrétien, c'est respecter Dieu, obéir à sa parole, recevoir Christ. Tous sont encouragés à rechercher le baptême du Saint-Esprit, mais certaines personnes ne peuvent pas l'obtenir. Nous citerons quelques obstacles au baptême du Saint-Esprit afin de permettre à tout un chacun de les éviter afin de vivre la réalité de la promesse.

#### **2. Pourquoi certains chrétiens ne sont pas baptisés du Saint-Esprit?**

La Bible dit qu' « heureux ceux qui sont intègres dans leur voie, qui marchent selon la loi de l'Eternel, ceux qui gardent les préceptes et qui marchent

dans ses voies! Tu as prescrit tes ordonnances pour qu'on les observe avec soin ... (Psaumes 119:1-3).

Le problème de certains chrétiens, c'est un manque de connaissance de la parole de Dieu. Le manque de temps ou le manque d'intérêt pour la lecture de la Bible est la cause de cette méconnaissance. Pour d'autres, ils connaissent bien la parole de Dieu mais ils refusent d'obéir «Ceux qui me disent Seigneur, Seigneur! n'entreront pas tous dans le royaume des cieux, mais seulement celui qui fait la volonté de mon père qui est dans les cieux» (Matthieu 7:21). Une autre raison est l'insoumission à la volonté de Dieu. Il est difficile pour certaines personnes de compter seulement sur Dieu. Dieu veut que ses enfants mettent leur confiance en lui car « sans la foi, il est impossible de lui être agréable (Hébreux 11:6). Voilà quelques raisons pour lesquelles certains chrétiens ne sont pas baptisés du Saint-Esprit.

Pour d'autres, c'est le manque d'amour. « Bien aimés, aimons-nous les uns les autres; car l'amour est de Dieu et quiconque aime est né de Dieu et connaît Dieu » (1 Jean 4:7) «Si quelqu'un dit: J'aime Dieu et qu'il haïsse son frère, c'est un menteur ... » (1 Jean 4:20-21). Il y a des chrétiens qui vivent avec des pensées impures ou qui sont jaloux pour le succès des autres. D'autres vivent dans découragement et l'inquiétude. Le Saint-Esprit peut aider à dissiper tout cela mais à nous de lui ouvrir la porte.

Parmi les obstacles au baptême du Saint-Esprit, il y a aussi l'esprit de querelles et d'orgueil qui animent certains chrétiens. Pour d'autres c'est le monde qui les anime. Ils doivent veiller sur la façon dont ils passent leur temps et dont ils utilisent leurs biens.

Dieu baptise qui il veut et surtout ceux qui l'honorent. Il est le même éternellement et il invite ses enfants à observer ce qui est droit.

Le chrétien doit apprendre à se soumettre à Dieu car nous devons savoir que « ses pensées ne sont pas nos pensées et ses voies ne sont pas nos voies (Esaïe 55:8). Le principe de base pour recevoir n'importe quelle bénédiction de Dieu est bien simple. Ne prenez pas Dieu à la légère. Le Saint-Esprit est donné à ceux qui, bien que loin d'être parfaits, aiment Dieu dans leur cœur plus que tout autre chose au monde.

#### Questions

Qui peut recevoir le baptême du Saint-Esprit?

Citez quatre obstacles au baptême du Saint-Esprit

#### **D. Comment Recevoir le Saint-Esprit**



Tout enfant de Dieu a le Saint-Esprit mais tous n'ont pas la plénitude de l'Esprit. Sur la route de Damas, Paul a accepté l'offre de salut du Christ mais il fut rempli du Saint-Esprit trois jours plus tard. Les Samaritains furent rempli du Saint-Esprit après avoir cru et été baptisé d'eau. Très souvent on suppose que le baptême du Saint-Esprit ou la plénitude de l'Esprit est un luxe spirituel réservé seulement à l'élite chrétienne. D'autres pensent qu'il faut atteindre un certain niveau de sainteté ou accomplir un certain nombre de bonnes œuvres avant de le recevoir. Selon le Nouveau Testament, la plénitude de l'Esprit n'est pas un luxe mais une nécessité. Paul disait aux Ephésiens: «Soyez remplis de l'Esprit».

Le baptême du Saint-Esprit est donc destiné aux chrétiens, à ceux qui se sont repentis et qui ont reçu le Christ comme leur sauveur comme l'a prêché Pierre le jour de la Pentecôte en Actes 2:38-39 «repentez-vous et que chacun de vous soit baptisé au nom de Jésus-Christ pour le pardon de ses péchés; et vous recevrez le don du Saint-Esprit. Car la promesse est pour vous, pour vos enfants et pour ceux qui sont au loin, en aussi grand nombre que le Seigneur notre Dieu les appellera».

#### Comment recevoir le baptême du Saint-Esprit

De la Genèse à l'Apocalypse, Dieu a fait des promesses à l'homme mais pour leur réalisation, il y a des principes de base. Par exemple à Abram il dira « Va-t'en de ton pays, de ta patrie et de la maison de ton père, dans le pays que je te monterai. (Après quoi) Je te bénirai, je rendrai ton nom grand et tu seras une source de bénédictions» (Genèse 12 :1-3 ). De même pour l'obtention du Saint-Esprit, Dieu montre les voies à suivre qui sont:

##### 1. La prière

Dieu donne son Esprit à ceux qui l'aiment plus que toute autre chose au monde. Dieu ne veut jamais la seconde place dans le cœur de l'homme. Celui qui aime Dieu cherchera chaque jour à entrer en communion avec lui et c'est par la prière que le croyant entre en communion avec Dieu. Il s'affectionne aux choses de Dieu, il abandonne tous ses droits à Dieu; il croit en Jésus pour toutes choses et fonce de tout cœur pour faire sa volonté. Dans Luc 11:13, le Seigneur nous conseille de prier afin d'obtenir le Saint-Esprit. Dieu est celui promet et qui réalise ses promesses et nous sommes ceux-là qui demandons et recevons.

##### 2. Une conscience pure

Celui qui souhaite faire l'expérience du baptême dans le Saint-Esprit doit se repentir. Dieu exige de notre part l'honnêteté. Il désire que nous reconnaissons nos torts. Nous devons donc lui confesser nos fautes pour qu'il nous pardonne. Il s'attend aussi à ce que nous confessons nos fautes à celui que nous avons offensé. Dans Ephésiens 4:30 l'Apôtre Paul nous invite à ne pas attrister «l'Esprit de Dieu. Nous l'attristons lorsque nous gardons une mauvaise conscience et que nous refusons de confesser nos péchés.

##### 3. L'obéissance

Le baptême du Saint-Esprit est un don. Le baptême ne se mérite pas. Il n'est pas le produit de bonnes œuvres. Le baptême est une grâce et la réception de cette grâce ne dépend pas de Dieu qui fait la promesse. Selon Actes 5:32 le Saint-Esprit est accordé par Dieu à ceux qui lui obéissent. 1 Thessaloniens 5:19 ajoute ceci « n'éteignez pas l'Esprit ». Nous pouvons éteindre l'Esprit en lui résistant, en lui disant non.

#### 4. La foi

La foi est aussi une condition essentielle dans la réception du baptême du Saint-Esprit. Hébreux 11:6 dit « Or sans la foi, il est impossible de lui être agréable; car il faut que celui qui s'approche de Dieu croit que Dieu existe et qu'il est le rémunérateur de ceux qui le cherchent ».

Le Seigneur Jésus t'invite à considérer les promesses du père et à les saisir par la foi. Le Saint-Esprit veut prendre possession de votre être (corps âme et esprit) afin de vous donner la joie. Le baptême du Saint-Esprit permet au croyant de parler en langues, ce qui élèvera votre âme dans une communion bénie avec Dieu le père. Dieu le père a fait la promesse et Dieu le fils est prêt à vous baptiser de son Esprit et ce qu'il vous demande de faire se résume en ces trois phrases :

Avoir soif et désirer être rempli de l'Esprit.

Venir à lui, aller à Jésus en vous soumettant à lui et en lui ouvrant notre cœur  
Boire, accomplir cet acte de foi en prenant ce qu'il vous offre

#### Questions

Qui peut s'attendre à être baptisé du Saint-Esprit?

Quelles sont les conditions posées par Christ pour avoir le baptême du Saint-Esprit?

### **E. Les Signes du Baptême du Saint-Esprit**

Le document de base qui nous permet de bien développer ce sujet est la Bible. Ce livre répond à toutes les questions de la vie chrétienne. La plupart des chrétiens savent que la Bible enseigne une expérience réelle du baptême du Saint-Esprit. Même si d'autres avis sur le sujet émergent, les fondements bibliques restent solides pour les chrétiens.

#### 1. L'expérience du baptême du Saint-Esprit

La Bible enseigne sans ambiguïté que le baptême du Saint-Esprit n'est pas synonyme de conversion. Dès qu'une personne se convertit, elle devrait se porter candidate au baptême du Saint-Esprit. Ce fut le cas avec les chrétiens de Samarie ( Actes 8) de même que pour Corneille et les gens de sa maison (Actes 10). Le baptême du Saint-Esprit est une porte d'entrée dans une vie spirituelle plus riche. Elle n'est donc pas facultative. Le baptême du Saint-Esprit n'est donc

pas la conversion. A la conversion le Saint-Esprit habite tout croyant authentique (Romains 8 :9) mais ne le remplit pas.

Le baptême du Saint-Esprit n'est la sanctification. Tout chrétien sauvé par le sang de Jésus est considéré par Dieu comme saint (1 Corinthiens 1 :2 ;6 :11). La sanctification est l'œuvre du Saint-Esprit par le moyen de la parole de Dieu (Jean 15 :3 ;17 :17). Le chrétien est appelé à se maintenir dans la sainteté par l'obéissance à la parole de Dieu.

Le baptême du Saint-Esprit est une expérience. Elle comprend toujours des manifestations visible et audible. « Lorsque Simon vit que le Saint-Esprit était donné par l'imposition des mains... » (Actes 8 :18). « Tous les fidèles circoncis qui étaient venus avec Pierre furent étonnés de ce que le don du Saint-Esprit était aussi répandu sur les païens. Car ils les entendaient parler en langues et glorifier Dieu » (Actes 10 :46).

La Bible est pleine de passages qui soutiennent que la première évidence du baptême du Saint-Esprit est de parler en langues. Mais ce qu'il faut d'abord rechercher n'est le parler en langues mais la plénitude de l'Esprit. Même si les avis sont partagés, le parler en langues est la manifestation normale et biblique du baptême du Saint-Esprit, preuve extérieure d'une plénitude intérieure.

## 2. Pourquoi est-il important de parler en langues ?

Quand il y a plénitude de l'Esprit, le parler en langues se manifeste simplement et normalement, à condition de se laisser diriger par le Saint-Esprit. Ce n'est pas le chrétien qui conçoit lui-même le parler en langues, cela relève de la volonté du Saint-Esprit.

Certaines personnes reconnaissent cette expérience comme étant biblique mais ils nient son importance. Son importance est due au fait que la venue de cette puissance dans le chrétien est un revêtement de puissance. Jésus avait promis à ses disciples le revêtement de puissance (Luc 24 :49 ; Actes 1 :8).

Le parler en langues accompagne la venue du Saint-Esprit. Etre rempli du Saint-Esprit et parler en langues constituent le baptême du Saint-Esprit c'est donc une expérience glorieuse et bienfaisante.

Le baptême du Saint-Esprit avec parler en langues a commencé à la Pentecôte. C'est à cette occasion que s'est produit ce précédent qui sert de référence pour l'avenir. Les exemples de la Bible, particulièrement du livre des Actes, confirment que le parler en langues est le signe initial du baptême du Saint-Esprit.

Acceptons donc que le parler en langues est un signe choisi par Dieu, et cette vérité découle de l'expérience normale qu'enseigne la Bible.

## Questions

Qu'est-ce que le baptême du Saint-Esprit dans la vie du chrétien ?

Si le baptême du Saint-Esprit est une expérience, comment se manifeste-t-il ?

3. Qui conçoit le parler en langues ?



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- All About Following Jesus. "Spiritual Maturity, a definition." Following Jesus, 2002/2009. <http://www.allaboutfollowingjesus.org/spiritual-maturity.htm> (accessed September 3, 2009).
- Ampim, Manu. "Africana Studies: The Five Major African Initiation Rites." <http://www.manuampim.com/AfricanInitiationRites.htm> Accessed September 5, 2009.
- Beeki, O. Jesus, the Only hope for Africa. Address at the Africa Evangelicals Association Pan-African Conference. Ouagadougou 2000 conference Center. Ouagadougou, 2004.
- Boa, Kenneth. *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
- Brookfield, Stephen D. *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.
- Bruce, A. B. *The Training of the Twelve*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971.
- Bureau of African Affairs. "Burkina Faso." U.S. Bureau of Public Affairs, electronic information and publication office, March 2, 2011. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2834.htm> (accessed June 14, 2009).
- Calian, Carnegie Samuel. *Today's Pastor in Tomorrow's World*. New York: Hawthorn, 1997.
- Chandapilla, P. T. "Opposition, Nominal Christianity and Non-Christian Religions." address at the Urbana Missionary Convention, 1964. [http://www.urbana.org/\\_artciles.cfm?RecordId=703](http://www.urbana.org/_artciles.cfm?RecordId=703) (accessed September 12, 2009).
- Chasteen, John. "Digging Deeper in God's Word." *Charisma*, June 2006, 89.
- Cheung, King Sing. "Recent Continuing Education Policies in Hong Kong: A Focus on Short-Term Performance Through Inducements." *International Education Journal* 7.7 (2006): 992-1006, <http://iej.com.au> (accessed September 19, 2009).
- Clarck, Robert E., Lin Johnson, and Allyn K Sloat. *Christian Education: Foundations for the Future*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1991.

- Cross, K. Patricia. *Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981.
- Dodge, Richard E. "Seven Tips for Teaching Improvement." Life Way Christian Resources, 2001- 2009.  
[http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article\\_main\\_page/0,1703,A%253D157057%2526%253D200105,00.html](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0,1703,A%253D157057%2526%253D200105,00.html). (accessed September 5, 2009).
- . *Teaching Adults: A Guide for Transformational Teaching—Leader Training Guide*.  
[http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article\\_main\\_page/0%2C1703%2CA%25253D158104%252526M%25253D200839%2C00.html](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0%2C1703%2CA%25253D158104%252526M%25253D200839%2C00.html). (accessed September 5, 2009).
- Doskocil, Lee Ann. "Causes of Poverty in Africa." Helium, April 16, 2008/2002-2009. <http://www.helium.com/items/1002970-causes-of-poverty-in-africa> (accessed June 15, 2009).
- Edge, Findley B. *Teaching for Results* Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995.
- Edge Combe. "Continuing Education." Edge Combe, 2009.  
[http://www.edgecombe.edu/continuing\\_ed/cont\\_ed.htm](http://www.edgecombe.edu/continuing_ed/cont_ed.htm) (accessed September 3, 2009).
- . "Continuing Education." Edge Combe, 2009.  
[http://www.edgecombe.edu/continuing\\_ed/cont\\_ed.htm](http://www.edgecombe.edu/continuing_ed/cont_ed.htm) (accessed September 12, 2009).
- Eldridge, Darly. *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996.
- Entre Culturas. "Why Is the Lack of Education a Priority Problem?" Entre Culturas, 2009. <http://www.entreculturas.org>, (accessed October 19, 2009).
- Equip. "Mission and Vision." Equip, 2008.  
<http://www.iequip.org/ce/index.php?module=ContentExpress&func=display&ceid=10&mid=-1> (accessed September 12, 2009).
- Farrell, Robert R. "Can Africa Be Saved?" The Real Truth, June 10, 2009/2009-2011. <http://www.realtruth.org/articles> (accessed June 5, 2009).
- Gangel, Kenneth O. *Building Leaders for Church Education*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1983.

- Held, Ronald G. *Teaching That Makes a Difference*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1992.
- Hendricks, Howard G. *Teaching to Change Lives*. Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1987.
- Howe, Tim, and A. P. Wallin. "The Purpose of Education." Quadium Net, January 19, 2000/Tuesday January 25. [http://quadium.net/school/purpose\\_education.html](http://quadium.net/school/purpose_education.html), (accessed October 19, 2009).
- Johns, Kaye. "Is There a Pattern to Jesus' Teaching on Prayer?" Prayer Power Ministries, 2008-2005. [http://www.learntoprayer.org/print\\_materials/messages/d17/d17-1.htm](http://www.learntoprayer.org/print_materials/messages/d17/d17-1.htm) (accessed September 12, 2009).
- Kato, Byang. *Theological Pitfalls in Africa*. Kisumu: Evangel Publishing House, 1975.
- Lebar, Lois E. *Education That Is Christian*. Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor, 1995.
- Makori, Henry. "Why Belief in Witchcraft Remains Strong Among Africans." All Africa, 2009. <http://www.Allafrica.com> (accessed April 3, 2009).
- MapZones. "Burkina Faso." Map Zones, 2000/2009. <http://www.MapZones.com>: Burkina Faso (accessed June 14, 2009).
- Matsuura, Koïchiro. Address at the Opening of the Subregional Conference Addressing Literacy Challenges in East Asia, South-East Asia, and the Pacific: Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches. Organized by UNESCO. Beijing. July 31 to August 1, 2007, <http://www.icae.org.uy/eng/voicesrising232.html>. (accessed September 19, 2009).
- Maxwell, John C. *Developing the Leader Within You*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993.
- Mezirow, Jack. *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991.
- Monekosso, Ticky. "Child Marriage 'Violates Rights.'" BBC News World, March 7, 2001, 14:09 GMT.
- Nation Master. "People statistics: Population growth rate by country." Nation

- Master, 2003. [http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo\\_pop\\_gro\\_rat-people-population-growth-rate](http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo_pop_gro_rat-people-population-growth-rate) (accessed August 22, 2009).
- Nee, Watchman. *The Spiritual Man*. Vol. 3. New York: Christian Fellowship 1968.
- Niane, D. T. *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*. Translated by G. D. Pickett. London: Longman, 1970.
- O'Donovan, Wilbur. *Biblical Christianity in Modern Africa*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2006.
- . *Introduction to Biblical Christianity from an African Perspective*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996.
- Omulokoli, Watson. "Leadership Training for Churches in Africa." *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* 11.1, 1992.
- Ouedraogo, Amadou. "An Overview of the World Bank's Support of Education in Burkina Faso over the Last Decade." The University of Iowa Center for International Finance and Development. <http://www.uiowa.edu/ifdebook/issues/africa/perspectives/2001B1.shtml> (accessed June 12, 2009).
- Oxfam Cool Planet. "Virtual Journey of Burkina Faso." Oxfam Cool Planet, 2009. <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/ontheline/exploe/journey/burkina/prted uc.htm> (accessed July 22, 2009).
- Pazmiño, Robert W. *Foundational Issues in Christian Education, An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Pyman, A. G.. "The Need for Continuing Education." FAO, 2007-2009. <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/F6137E/f6137e05.htm> (accessed September 13, 2009).
- Rapture Ready. "How Do I Become a Mature Christian and How Long Does It Take?" Rapture Ready, 2009. <http://raptureready.com/faq/faq24.html> (accessed November 10, 2009).
- Reed, James E., and Ronnie Prevost. *A History of Christian Education*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994.
- Rouch, Mark, and Shirley D. McCune. *Continuing Education for Ministers: A Pilot Evaluation of Three Programs*. Washington, D.C.: No publisher, 1968.
- Roy, Christopher D. "The Art of Burkina Faso." Christopher D. Roy. 2002.

<http://pagesperso-orange.fr/africart/pages/artbf.htm> (accessed August 21, 2009).

Sanders, J. Oswald. *Spiritual Discipleship*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1994.

Shelley, Marshall, ed. *Growing Your Church Through Training and Motivation*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997.

Slick, Matt. "What Does It Mean to Be a Christian?" Carm, 1995-2010.  
<http://www.carm.org/christian> (accessed November 10, 2009).

Smith, Oswald J. *The Man God Uses*. Nairobi: Njogu Gitene, 2000.

Stott, John. *Calling Christian Leaders: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel, and Ministry*. Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2002.

Swift, Fletcher H. *Education in Ancient Israel from Earliest Times to 70 A.D.* Chicago: Open Court, 2009.

Taylor, Bill. "Five Teaching Principles for Spiritual Transformation." Life Way Christian Resources, 2001-2009.  
[http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article\\_main\\_page/0,1703A%253D157057%25336M%253D200105,00.html](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0,1703A%253D157057%25336M%253D200105,00.html) (accessed September 12, 2009).

The World Bank. "Education and Development." The World Bank Group, 2009.  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:20591648~menuPK:1463858~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:282386,00.html>, accessed October 19, 2009.

Tidwell, Charles. A. *The Educational Ministry of a Church*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996.

Tillin, Tricia. "Be Perfect, part 2b, How Mature Am I?" Into Truth, 2009.  
<http://www.intotruth.org/dev/perfect2b.html> (accessed November 10, 2009).

## VITA

The author of this work is Zacharie Delma. Born in Zabre, Burkina Faso, on September 23, 1957, Rev. Delma grew up in a Christian family in which the root of faith is via his uncle, Rev. Dabila Delma. After graduating from the Bible School of Koubri in 1983, Zacharie Delma stayed in Ouagadougou-Gounghin Assemblies of God Church for an internship and went in 1985 to Saponé, where he planted three churches. From Saponé he went to West Africa Advanced School of Theology in Lomé, Togo, and completed his bachelor of theology degree in 1992. While serving the Lord in teaching ministry at the Bible School of Koubri, Rev. Delma attended the Assemblies of God Graduate School of Theology in Lomé, Togo, and earned a master's degree in missiology (1998). In 1998, after serving in full-time Bible school teaching ministry at Koubri and later at Bobo-Dioulasso, he came to Ouagadougou. There, at the headquarters of the Assemblies of God, he serves as national director of the Sunday school program, editor of the church magazine *Flamme*, and national coordinator of the Continuing Training Program for local church leaders. He entered the doctor of ministry program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, and plans to graduate in May 2011.

Rev. Delma has served on the District Executive Board at Saponé and Ouagadougou. He has been married to Aoua Delma for twenty-eight years. They have five children: Samuel, Danielle, Michele, Lucie, and Josue. Rev. Delma is now the Second Vice President of Burkina Faso Assemblies of God General Council.

